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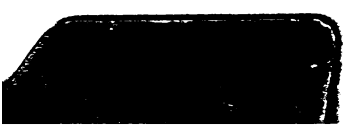

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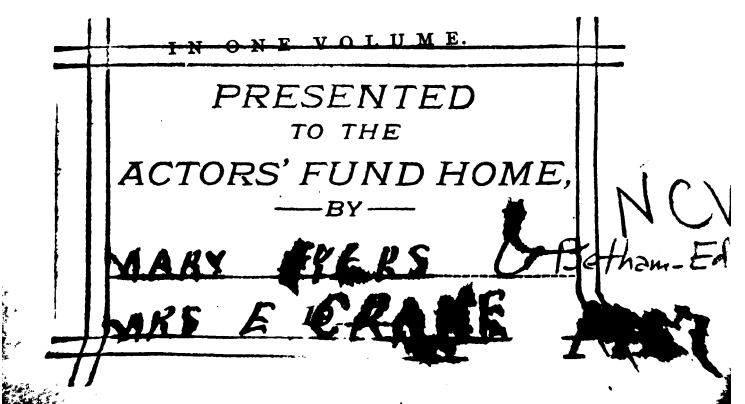

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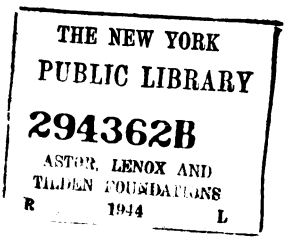
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"I never saw
Such noble fury in so poor a thing;
Such precious deeds in one that promised naught
But beggary and poor looks."

Cymbeline.

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MARTHA ROSE, TEACHER.

CHAPTER I.

THE POSY ON THE WINDOW-SILL.

EVERY morning, except when stone-picking and gleaning, May Fair and Gunpowder Plot emptied the school, passing the same spots precisely at the same time, Martha Rose might be seen wending her way to Oxborrow. Martha Rose she was always called by high and low, the title of Miss being as yet the privilege of gentlefolks' and farmers' daughters. It was a long trudge in seasons wet and dry, three good miles if a rod, for Martha lived in one parish and in another taught the cross-row, strokes, pot-hooks, sums and sampler. But fifteen pounds a year was very handsome pay in those days and she never troubled herself about distance or weather. Not arrogantly or fussily, for, as neighbours said, Martha was none of your stuck-up, rampaging sort, instead with quiet dignified satisfaction she fulfilled her important and well-paid function. Although living at Burghersh, or Burridge as the place was called, she had

been named teacher at Oxborrow by reason of superior acquirements, no young woman at the latter place being sufficiently advanced in the three R's for such a post. Well, therefore, might Martha congratulate herself on her good fortune.

More than anything else that air of quiet dignity and circumspection distinguished the young schoolmistress from others of her class, an intermediate class standing between labouring folk on the one hand and small farmers and tradesmen on the other, Martha's father had been the village bricklayer, her sister Adah did the homelier kind of dressmaking, and her blind uncle Jethro, blind Rose, as he was usually called, carried on the business of fish salesman.

No rustic ideal was Martha Rose, with eyes blue as tea-saucers, cheeks round as a plate, throat white as the driven snow, and hair "that flaxen, a new-born babe's couldn't match it." Nor was the typical brunette represented in her person; not black as sloes were her locks and eyes, not white as the driven snow was her complexion; with her soft hazel eyes, her small symmetrical features and pretty brown hair, worn loop-like over the ears as custom ordained, she might have escaped the notice of most. But here and there one observer more perspicacious than the rest would have found out that Martha was almost beautiful.

Attire was far from decorative in those early Victorian days. Free however from vulgarity were Martha's straw bonnet, crossed and curtained with lavender ribbon, brown stuff gown and little check shawl. All seemed to suit the wearer and lend Quakerish dignity and charm.

Quietly and with a set pace she stepped along the

turnpike road, hardly noting the signs of spring, yet unconsciously gladdened by recurring sights and sounds, the trill of the first skylark in the cold blue sky, the hedges beaded with tiny crimson buds, the celandine starring moist corners, the musical commotion of nesting birds.

If her thoughts were elsewhere Martha felt cheered by these awakenings all the same, but as she approached her destination some secret joy or looking forward brightened her eyes and made her draw quick impatient breaths. Within sight of the school-room, a small building abutting on the church, she quickened her pace and her usually pale cheeks slightly reddened.

Over against this side of the church were seen the premises of a largish farm-house, stackyard, barn, granary and gig-house, orchard and vegetable garden, the house itself being partly hidden. It was an ordinary dwelling of the better sort, facsimile of scores hereabouts, one-gabled, red-tiled with whitewashed walls and a porch later on to be weighed down with honeysuckle and japonica.

Glancing, but only just glancing, at all these, Martha hastened forward, her colour deepening, her lips parting joyously as she drew near. Yes, the posy was there, the now daily offering of undeclared yet unquestionable devotion! On the sill of the little side window overlooking a churchyard corner lay freshly gathered flowers, crocuses, polyanthuses, violets and a sprig of rosemary.

Feeling quite safe from observation Martha snatched up the nosegay and kissed it rapturously, then retracing her steps she unlocked the school-room door. What was her surprise when from the vestry in dashed the rector.

As a rule the Reverend Mr. Paglar visited the school once or twice daily but never at so early an hour. The broom with which she was sweeping almost fell from her hands; she curtseyed, unable to get out a word.

"Martha Rose," thus the rector always addressed her as has been mentioned there were no Misses outside drawing-rooms and best parlours in those days, "Martha Rose, just drop that broom, please. The children can play outside a bit; I've a bone to pick with you."

The Reverend Cyril Paglar, although bluff and hasty was what country folks called "good at bottom." If he soundly rated his parish clerk or his schoolmistress one day, they knew that he would make amends the next But both voice and expression now told Martha clearly enough that this was no case of a mere scolding. He had something to reproach her with far more serious than Johnny Mudd's backwardness in the cross-row or Polly Wade's untidy sampler.

Heavy-browed, burly, slovenly in dress, the rector looked rather like a well-to-do farmer than a clergyman His speech too was homely, often uncouth.

"You manage the youngsters very well," resumed Mr. Paglar, "that's neither here nor there, and what I have to say won't use up much breath. The long and short of it is, Martha Rose, that I won't have any nan nicking* with hangers-on about these premises and so I tell you."

The broom dropped from the young schoolmistress's hands. She stood still dumfounded.

"Your reverence," she faltered, tears welling from

* East Anglian, to trifle, to flirt.

under her drooping eyelashes, "I have never done anything to blush at——" then she broke down.

"Oh! you needn't tell me what I know already," the rector went on, the sight of her distress moved him; "you're a respectable, well-conducted young woman and mean no harm, I've no doubt; but you are all so much tinder to the devil's sparks and who if not your minister should try to help you out of temptation? I name no names, you know well enough that the young man who puts flowers on yonder window-sill does not belong to the station in which it has pleased God to place you and can therefore mean no good."

Thereupon his eyes having just lighted on her nosegay he whipped it up, threw wide the door and, lo! before she could utter a remonstrance, her precious flowers were scattered about the road.

That terrible outrage—so it seemed to Martha—unlocked her trembling lips. Looking the rector full in the face she spoke up for herself.

"Some evilly disposed person has been trying to impinge my modesty, your reverence," she said; "no one has ever seen me nannicking either with my betters or with anyone else."

"And no one has been seeking to impinge your modesty, as you call it," put in Mr. Paglar, smiling in spite of himself at the stilted phrase, "but the young man I spoke of just now is always hovering about the place and it is not for me to countenance it. In a couple of weeks stone-picking will begin and the school will close; before it re-opens you must make up your mind, whether or no you will give up an honest livelihood for a piece of folly that cannot possibly lead to good and may cost

you not only your bread but your character. Don't answer me, I've said my say."

With that the rector made for the vestry, looking back on the threshold:—

"I wouldn't cry about nothing if I were you. I don't want to be bothered with a new schoolmistress, nor does Mrs. Paglar either. And if you wish for a sweetheart there's more than one honest fellow in your own station who'd take you to church to-morrow, I'll warrant."

"Your reverence"—Martha murmured through her tears, but before she could get out a word more Mr. Paglar's burly figure had disappeared.

Not a moment remained for weeping or deliberation. Hastily drying her eyes and swallowing her sobs, she did her best to make up for lost time. Glancing out of the open door, assuring herself that only a toddler or two were in sight, she dashed forward, collected her poor, dust-stained blossoms and hid them away. Then the sweeping and dusting went on apace and a quarter of an hour later hobnail shoes clattered outside and about thirty odd little figures trooped in, the boys in corduroy jackets and trousers, the girls in cotton sun-bonnets with little woollen shawls crossed over the breast and tied in a knot behind.

Followed a chorus of "Mornin', teacher," and hanging up of caps and bonnets, next the taking of places, the boys on one side, the girls on the other. When all was quiet Martha standing up led the sweet old hymn that takes us all back to early days and mother's knee.

Awake, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run,
Shake off dull sloth and joyful rise
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

Harmoniums and pianos formed no part of school furniture in those days, but Martha had been taught singing at the rectory and time and tune were fairly kept. Next came the Lord's Prayer after which the cross-row, strokes and pot-hooks, spelling and sums began in right good earnest.

One pathetic trait characterised Martha's scholars. As much store as she set by her high calling did these youthful crow-scarers, stone-pickers, weeders and gleaners set by their scholastic opportunities.

Well, indeed, might they glory in the three R's! What with the parental penny extracted from the weekly eight shillings, what with the long absences necessitated by labours afield, it was indeed a case of sovereign privilege.

Not many when quitting the school for good had mastered alike the universal symbol of thought, the fair art of calligraphy and the elements of numeral science. Those indeed who, as the phrase went, could find their places in church or meeting-house, indite a valentine and make out their own account for piece-work on Saturday nights counted themselves equipped for the battle of life in right good earnest.

To be able to pore over the Bible and sign his or her name in the parish register when married was almost a title of honour. And the majority who had only acquired what Martha artlessly called "the rudiments of reading" were not looked down upon as ignoramuses.

With a swelling heart and eyes that in spite of her-

self would fill from time to time she now went through the morning routine. To guide stiff fingers over the copy-book was perhaps her most arduous task, spelling and sums being easy by comparison. Small as were these hands they were already roughened by toil, the formation of a letter often being an almost superhuman difficulty.

Although gentlest of the gentle, Martha's little stick, her wand of office, would from time to time descend sharply on what really appeared to be refractory knuckles.

Thankful enough she felt when morning lessons came to an end and jumping, shouting, skipping the little rabble poured out into the road. Over her dinner she could ponder undisturbed. A very homely meal it was, yet relishable to keen appetites. Opening her basket she now took out a thick slice of pork and sage turnover, that favourite compound resembling bluish white marble delicately veined with green. Spreading a coarse, spotless pocket-handkerchief on her knees, Martha plied clasp-knife, her spirit and forces further reinforced by draughts from a bottle of thin home-brewed ale.

Hunger and thirst stayed, she thought and thought and thought.

How was it that the rector's words seemed a revelation, opening her eyes to discomfiture and perhaps dangers never before dreamed of? These flowers laid on her window-sill, their donor a substantial young farmer, herself the village schoolmistress—what good could come of them? Why had she been so simple, so blind?

Why not from the first have let the posies lie unnoticed?

Then after tearful self-reproach she debated within

herself what she should do. Write to her undeclared lover? Cast out the next day's flowers as the rector had done? See him and explain? But when and where? As yet, too, they had only exchanged half a dozen words to each other at the last school treat; why had she dwelt so much upon what on his part might signify nothing at all, might be only a meaningless attention? There was no garden attached to the school-house, he might have placed the nosegays there merely to please her and the children, and to brighten the place? Yet and yet——

Two o'clock struck and the benches refilled before she had come to any decision. Sewing, the recitations of hymns and "little pieces," and Scripture lessons occupied the afternoon, the rector or one of the rectory ladies usually looking in. Mr. Paglar would examine a class, Mrs. Paglar make a general inspection, or Miss Sophia give a reading.

More than the rector's onslaughts Martha had hitherto dreaded his lady's sharp eye and scissors. Not a speck of dust, not a cobweb escaped Mrs. Paglar's inspection, and ever bent on hygiene and the fitness of things she carried a large pair of scissors at her girdle. Superabundant locks were ruthlessly laid low, the shearing being followed with a chorus of lamentation. Each little bor or mor* felt like a juvenile Samson shorn of prowess and individuality.

To-day Martha almost hoped for some such upset, for anything that would divert those penetrating glances from herself. To her immense relief instead of Mrs. Paglar appeared the firstborn of her eleven children, a

* E. A., boy, mawther or girl.

tall, handsome girl in whose face might be read pathos of the overworked, care-worn, conscientious el sister. Why had Sophia Paglar, good and handsom she was, reached her twenty-second year without a lo

One might suppose, to parody an immortal sente that a glance at those sweet, resigned features would l called forth a veritable outburst of chivalrous fee placed a dozen knights-errant at her service. But as yet uncompromising sisterly devotion, the ardu duties of nurse, instructress, wardrobe-keeper, to say thing of Sunday-school teaching and the rest, had been ever so faintly irradiated by love or roma Would they ever be?

Sophia was a very tall girl, her tallness being a diminished by the habit of slightly stooping. Ere f in her teens she had been put to nursing babies, fi and carriage being ultimately spoiled by the pro The lovely countenance made up for such drawbacl

"Have these dear children all been good as gol day, Martha?" she asked in a voice of singular ch

"Well, Miss Sophia, I can't but say as how they h Billy Warner has been a little mischievious ('mischiev was always thus pronounced in country places) but had the stick twice and been put in the corner."

Hereupon Billy Warner, a seven-year-old imp barley-coloured hair and a complexion freckled a bird's egg, began to whimper and wipe his eyes witl corduroy coat-sleeve.

"Billy will be a better boy to-morrow, I feel su the young lady replied, bringing out a book from u her shawl, "and now, dear children, sit quiet as m whilst I read you a story."

nce or twice a week Sophia to the general joy
l replace her parents in the schoolroom, her gentle
ace and quiet ways strikingly contrasted with the
's brusqueness and Mrs. Paglar's well-intentioned
ty. Miss Sophia moreover came not to catechise,
local phrase to "terrify," with a general examina-
her mission was the cultivation of the imaginative
y, in other words she read a tale, some narration
to such listeners.

o-day she had brought that gem of nursery litera-
ong since set aside for less artless productions, the
y of Prince Lee Boo.

or the first few minutes there was a shuffling of
a fidgeting of hands, a painful effort of thirty rest-
ttle beings to remain squat and still. But by the
the musically-voiced reader had reached the heart
r story one could have heard a pin drop. These
ered little stone-pickers and crow-scarers were as
etely under a charm as the Sultan Shariar listen-
o the Grand Vizier's elder daughter. With eyes
upon their prelectress, mouths agape, hands out-
ied on their knees, boys and girls followed the
y of little black Lee Boo, son of Abba Thulle,
of the Pelew Islands. Breathlessly they heard how
entle savage, his father, put him under the care of
Captain Wilson; how after a tender farewell he
im embark for the white man's country across the
here to be clothed, taught, taking back knowledge
e true God and many things; how as the years went
bba Thulle vainly watched for the expected sail,
when at last it came learned that Lee Boo would

never, never return, that he had died far away from people and his island home.

It was not only the simple record of fact that mo the rustic listeners but a newly awakened feeling of s pathy. A sense of fellowship was now brought hom them, the conviction that the little black boy was on themselves; although of a different complexion no les a human being. In a dim indefinite way too they reali the magic of printed characters, the tears and smile be evoked by a book, above all, the reality of thi unseen. Not for the first time Sophia had made open wide, mouths gape, fidgeters sit stock still. To- she had achieved more, had melted hearts and ca forth tears.

After a prompted chorus of "Thank ye, thank Miss Sophia" a bobbing of pinafored little girls, a pul of little boys' forelocks, the thirty and odd scholars c more poured into the road.

CHAPTER II.

CLEM.

OUTSIDE the school house a pathetic figure awaited Martha. With head bowed down, immovable as a statue, on his left arm a basket of fish, his right arm grasping his crome-stick, blind Rose had waited there for nearly an hour. It was not always easy for the fish hawker to find a leader between Burridge and Ipswich.

But just above church and school was the turn-pike gate commanding four cross roads, and no matter the time of day he could often get a lift from the quays so far, afterwards picking up someone bound his way, or counting upon Martha, ever a ready guide. The blind man was taciturn and contemplative, a mood that suited her quiet dreamy temperament.

"Have you been waiting long, uncle?" she asked.

"Since the ploughmen came home to dinner," was the patient reply.

The ploughmen set out for the furrow as soon as it was light in winter and at six in summer, returning at three o'clock all the year round. Then they dined and the horses after watering and grooming rested for the day. Blind Rose at night, like many another countryman, could feel the hands of his big, silver watch, but his time-piece by day was the clockwork routine of the

farm. Indoors and out every process had its appointed hour, regularly as harvest followed haysel* and wheat-sowing preceded hedging and ditching, so certain tasks had their allotted period.

"You needn't have been on your feet all that while, uncle Jethro, why not have rested at the toll gate?"

"I'm not a-goin' to say that Master Simmons doesn't always make me welcome, Martha, but I don't like to be beholden, and as said Jesus the son of Sirach—withdraw thy feet from thy neighbour's house lest he weary of thee."

Full as an egg is full of meat was the blind fish-salesman of Scriptural lore. Every evening Martha read some portion of the Bible to him, whilst Adah plied the needle or more frequently gossiped abroad.

Uncle Jethro was a Methodist and had been designed for the ministry, his blindness, it was said, being the result of overtaxing weak eyes. Those tried servants could aid him no longer, but he still occasionally preached on Sundays, and if Martha gave him her spare moments he repaid her by his superior acquirements. "There wasn't such a speller as blind Rose in all Burridge," folks said of him, "nor such a hand at puttin' together or expoundin' either."

Thus he not only helped his niece in writing and inditing but also turned an honest penny by dictating to others. Many a valentine had he framed for some anxious swain unacquainted with the elements of prosody, many a declaration had he indited for some stalwart ploughman guileless of strokes and pot-hooks. And not infrequently

* E. A., hay-harvest.

would he arbitrate between neighbours locally described as tradesmen, that is to say, pig dealers and jobbers who kept a cart and voted at elections but did not possess enough arithmetic to keep clear of squabbles. A less litigious set than these Suffolkers of a past generation did not exist.

When, however, the first four rules of arithmetic are incompletely mastered, the simplest transaction may set buyer and seller at loggerheads.

An unprofitable vessel blind Rose often called himself; in reality he was a centre of sweetness and light, and among his home folk he was something more. The sightless man from whom the human countenance, its tell-tale frowns, blushes and pallor were hidden for ever, had the consciences of a little circle in his keeping. Unseeing, exposed by his infirmity to subterfuge and misconception, that very infirmity hedged him round with respect, conferred upon him almost apostolic weight. It seemed nothing short of cowardice to trick or deceive one so dependent upon others. Thus he was made aware of everything taking place around him, even Adah, "the forradest mawther for miles round," as she was called, preferred a rating from Uncle Jethro to the burden of a secret, the doing things unbeknown. Her flirtations or "nannickins," the valentines sent by her to half a dozen sweethearts on the 14th of February, her gaddings about at Whitsuntide, would evoke a harangue that set her crying. The tears wiped, she became hoydenish as before.

Just now it was Martha who longed for a scolding. The young farmer's posies, the rector's admonition and alternative, could she only summon courage to tell him

of these, for once and for all be rid of her night-mare?

Silently and with the slow deliberate pensive pace of leader and led the pair trudged on. By no means a communicative man was blind Rose, seldom he opened his lips, but when he did it was to some purpose. And he must ever have attentive listeners.

"What made you start so just now, Martha?" he asked after awhile.

"Did I start, uncle?" the schoolmistress replied, colouring as she spoke.

Involuntarily she had jerked his arm, but the blush was not for a prevarication. Just then a turnip-cart had come in sight, alongside being a familiar figure adored or hateful, she hardly knew which of the two to-day.

"If I can't see leastways I can feel," was the somewhat reproachful retort, "but females are all alike jumping at the sight of a wurrum, we ourselves being all poor wurrums. Who comes yonder?"

"One of the Mr. Fisons with a turnip-cart, Uncle."

There was adroitness in Martha's answer and again she coloured, this time not with fluster but with shame facedness. She could have told Clem from his elder brother at twice the distance; the vague indication was dictated by prudence.

Farmers, even of the substantial class, did not in these days disdain labours afield. Seldom indeed they followed the plough, but lighter jobs always came to hand, whilst it was ever the master's task to stock sheaves in harvest time and feed his pigs all the year round To-day Clem was carting a load of hurdles from one field to another.

"Day, to you, Master Rose," cried a blithe voice, voice of the lover! "Fish anything like reasonable this afternoon?"

"Day, Mr. Clem, for you've only to open your mouth and I know you from your brother," replied the blind man halting. "Might you be a-wantin' a prime pair of soles or three or four mackerel? Here, Martha, heave up my basket against the cart whilst Mr. Clem takes his pick."

"Takes a look anyhow," rejoined the other, still in the same exuberant tones. At last had come the opportunity so long waited for in vain! "What might you ask for yonder bit of cod?"

"Bespoke, Mr. Clem, bespoke for the Hall and the oysters likewise. But if so be that your mind is set upon cod you sha'n't be circumvented. Have a care, Martha, how awkward you are with the basket sure-ly! Heave it up, I say."

Uncle Jethro was a trifle crusty, and, maybe from perverseness maybe on principle, always crustier when matters prospered. A fruitless errand to the Ipswich docks, an empty basket, not a sixpence to be turned over, ever rendered him placable and soft-spoken.

"Leave go, Master Rose, I've good hold, there, now you may handle your fish as if it stood on your kitchen table."

The young farmer had steadied the basket on the edge of his turnip-cart, and whilst propping it up with one hand contrived to slip a scrap of folded paper into Martha's ungloved palm, as he did so pressing her fingers tight. Not a word of course could be spoken, not so much as a syllable whispered into her ear, nor durst he for a moment appear preoccupied. But a glance,

albeit swift and stolen, may express much more in a given time than words, and although Martha shook her head reprovingly, whole-hearted response beamed on him all the while.

The lover has ever a duality, often a triple individualism, in his mistress's eyes. A well-looking fellow enough was Clem Fison, neither handsome nor plainer than dozens of his fellows on the Ipswich Cornhill. But first of all, he was her lover, that relation bestowing a quite new attribute, an attribute that looked like an entity; next he was also a Mister who drove a gig, voted on election day, and in partnership with his brother leased one of the finest occupations for miles round; thirdly, he was himself, a young man whose black cloth surtout, neatly fitting boots, chimney-pot hat and white lawn pocket-handkerchief on Sundays transformed him into a veritable Cinderella's prince.

All this while the blind man was handling his fish with the sureness and nicety of the most sharp-sighted. Pathetically rigid and erect, his head immovable as if fixed in a vice, he singled out this fish and that, never fumblings never at a loss. On the contents of his brilliant sea-spoils he could not feast his eyes, the mackerel flashing like polished steel, the salmon deep-hued as a shaft of red marble, the one little mullion, rose-pink, tinted with gold, were hidden from his view. But touch in a great measure supplanted eyes, vision seemed relegated to his fingers' ends, weight, proportions, sort, herein for him lay no mystery.

"The head and shoulders of cod and the oysters as I was a-sayin', Mr. Clem, are bespoke for the quality, likewise the red mullet for Madam Shafto's mother, her

ladyship is that pingling* many's the night I lie awake ponderin' on what I can rake up for her next—I'll be obliged to you, Martha, to hold the basket still, 'tis all of a joggle."

Truth to tell, willing one thing, wishing another, Martha had tried to force her lover's note into his hand, with the inevitable result that it was forced back again; in the amorous contest Uncle Jethro's load being jerked within an inch of turning over.

"But if I'm not good tightly** out of my reckonin', Mr. Clem, here's just what your mouth is a-waterin' for —there goes the basket again, a-jiggity-jig; Martha, you're past bearin' this afternoon."

The all-important matter of the *billet doux* was still in abeyance, encounter of hands doing duty for speech.

"A couple of mackerel, did you say, Master Rose?" he now broke in, "that'll do then."

"Mackerel is one thing, cod another," the blind man made severe reply, "and it was cod your thoughts were a runnin' on just now. Look ye here, none can say I'm givin' to boastin' of my own, but if so be anyone ever saw a finer tail than this here piece I'm holdin' up to view I'd gainsay him afore judge and jury. Eighteenpence, Mr. Clem, and sixpence extra for a taste of oysters."

"Yes, the salmon—I mean the mullet—I mean the mackerel—will do nicely," stammered Clem. He had not the remotest idea of what he was saying. The only fact present to his mind was that of Martha's plump

* E. A., dainty at the table.
** E. A., very much, considerably.

little hand being held fast in his own and, crowning satisfaction! his love-letter lay at the bottom of her pocket.

Martha for her part fell suddenly intoxicated, even her uncle's presence could not sober her and as she stood thus answering glance for glance, smile for smile, she momentarily loosed hold, down slid the basket, mackerel, cod, salmon, and her ladyship's red mullet floundering about in all directions.

It was highly characteristic of blind Rose that no sooner had the dreaded catastrophe taken place than he became his old resigned self, every trace of irascibility disappearing, his behaviour being rather that of a culprit than of a victim. With him, indeed, evil fortune or mere mishap was accepted as Divine chastisement, so many reminders of mortality and human vicissitude.

"Oh! uncle, what have I done?" cried Martha, on the point of crying with contrition and dismay.

The fish perhaps spoiled, the day's toilsome march wasted, the savings of many days lost, these thoughts checked love-making and romance, ruthlessly recalled the hundrum of every day.

Clem also felt abashed and conscience-stricken.

"Nay, I'm to blame, I must have let go, Master Rose," he stammered, stooping to pick up the fish, "but fortunately I'd drawn the tumbril near the bank and there's a goodish bit of grass hereabouts."

"Grass or grit, Mr. Clem, the fish may get one or t'other, I'm not a-goin' to murmur. The wind isn't always at our backs and brunts learn us more than blessings. Have you heaved up the red mullet, Martha? I shall get the length of her ladyship's tongue if I've nothin' agreeable to her tetchy stomach to-day."

"Yes, the red mullet rumbled onto the grass, uncle, it's none the worse, nor the salmon and cod either, it's the mackerel that have got just a little gritty," poor Martha said, as on her hands and knees she refilled the basket.

"Then I'll take the mackerel, the lot of 'em," quoth Clem valiantly, "folks don't eat the skin, Master Rose, and we must all swallow a peck of dust before we die, so they say, I for one am not dirty particular."

Elated was the young farmer, just then he felt ready to eat blind Rose's basket, in fact to do anything, having for reward Martha's blushing company.

The fish replaced, the mackerel paid for, it behoved him, however, to go on his way.

"Afternoon, Master Rose," he said, looking significantly at the young schoolmistress, "glad the spill did no damage to speak of;" then plain as words could say, his glance bade Martha answer his request favourably.

For a long time Uncle Jethro remained silent, at last came the dreaded remark.

"I've been puzzlin' my head about Mr. Clem, Martha; he seemed main strange, kinder lost, as a man might be in drink, one moment ready to jump over a five-barred gate, the next for all the world as if taken up with a female, bein' over head and ears. I never heard tell of the Mr. Fisons goin' a-courtin', did you?"

"No, uncle," was the trembling reply.

"Mr. Dan is a high-flier, he'll be hankerin' after high life or sniffin' round money. The pair on 'em could have their pick, five thousand pound each to his name, if a penny, but Mr. Clem is tarred with another brush —that simple and easy-goin', if I'm not out of my

reckonin' he'd marry a girl that took his fancy had she only the clothes she stood up in."

Martha's heart beat proudly as she listened. The thing seemed wholly, deliciously incomprehensible. True, indeed, it was, a young man in Clem Fison's position, as her uncle put it, could have his pick, and he had chosen a bricklayer's daughter, the village schoolmistress, her own little insignificant self! Momentary exultation obliterated the morning's bitter check. She did not now dwell upon the rector's warning. All she could think of was that tiny note hidden deep down in her pocket. From time to time, just as children must constantly finger the penny about to be spent at the sweet-shop, she would assure herself that the letter was there, then smilingly forecast its contents.

Wrapt in thought the pair trudged on, not perhaps wholly unmindful of the sweetness and musicalness around, but silent and self-centred. The way resembled a thousand toll-bar roads in Suffolk, no ups and downs, no perspectives gained as you go, no distance lending the charm of indefiniteness.

Yet unbeautiful, uncharacteristic it never was, from bean-flowering to weed-burning, from haulm-stacking to barley-sowing, each season decorated, individualised.

These lofty hedges in themselves constituted a sweet-scented, pictorial calendar. With the first note of the thrush and the silvery buds of white poplar against the cold blue sky came masses of violets, the white and the purple both richly fragrant; next followed the burgeoning pollard and the primroses, little reddish gold globes above, lemon-coloured discs almost hiding the grass

below; when the emerald of the young larch dominated the chromatic greens around, its tints sharper, more dazzling than any, appeared the cowslip with its tiny orange bells and dainty sea-green stalk. Not growing plentifully by the roadside do we find this most lovely, most endearing flower, only here and there a cluster or two beckoning us into some pightle* or meadow, there to find a harvest—exquisite crop rarely garnered either for service or delight. And so on throughout the year, bare brown branches and leaden skies being regally brightened by berries crimson, scarlet and purple, the rose-pink of the spindle-tree outshining all, the wintry landscape made to glow as keeping-room and kitchen by blazing logs.

A thatched cottage here and there with little flower garden, one or two farm-houses surrounded by stack-yards, barns and granaries, only these varied the uniformity. But as they neared Burghersh the road dipped suddenly, amid gently sloping pastures purled a clear bright stream, the white walls of a watermill on one hand, on the other the hanging gardens of a homely little terrace, lent character and charm. Below the honey-suckle embowered tenements so airily perched lay the village street, general shop, smithy and the rest, whilst peeping from the trees, in close proximity, yet apart, might be discerned grey church tower and walls of hall and vicarage.

"Is it your turn to make the round with me to-day, Martha?" asked the blind man as they came within welcome sound of the millrace.

* E. A., enclosed paddock.

"Yes, Uncle, but I'll ask Adah to go if it's al same," Martha replied, "I'm a bit tired to-day."

She coloured with self-reproach, a moment half-pleased to be punished for her prevarication. was out. Another long hour before she could rea letter!

CHAPTER III.

THE BROTHERS.

If that little *billet doux* in Martha's pocket had seemed a live coal fraught with danger and destruction, the fact of having placed it there filled her lover with equal dismay. Personal courage is a veritable chameleon, and a young man may well show extraordinary valour under some circumstances and poltroonery under others.

More than once Clem Fison had saved the life of a sick horse at the peril of his own; for there is no riskier job than an amateur's use of the lancet, but farriers are not always within reach, and where horses are concerned it is often a case of immediate kill or cure.

"Send for Mr. Clem," a neighbour's head-man would say when some valuable beast lay apparently at death's door. And the summons would never be sent in vain.

If a mad bull got abroad, a hay-stack caught fire, pig-poisoners were about, or the fowl-house was broken open, it was ever "Send for Clem Fison."

Many a time he had spent the night abroad, with loaded gun by his side, on the look-out for gipsy or tramp; generally, and often after a nasty tussle, catching a prowler. Nor by day was he less serviceable in

emergencies. An unerring marksman, no sooner did a kite set the hens fluttering their wings distractedly, rushing madly to and fro and uttering piteous clucks, than he was sent for, and rarely indeed did he quit the premises before the enemy had been brought down.

But here poor Clem's stoutness of heart and prowess began and ended. A hero out of doors, by the fireside he was quite unable to hold his own, Danvers, the elder, reigning supreme. Never were two brothers more unequally matched in power of will, an inequality which hitherto the younger had accepted as a matter of course. To-day for the first time Clem realised the fact, brooding over it, trembling before it, in imagination fighting against it. Why should he not follow his heart's desire? He was only a year younger than Dan, their fortunes were on a par, what earthly right had Dan or anyone living to stand between him and his dearest wishes, in other words to hinder him from courting and marrying as he pleased?

The exultation of those stolen glances and warm hand-clasps lessened with every step homeward, by the time he reached the back-house* door a sinking of the heart and terrible feeling of helplessness replaced the joyous confidence that had gone before.

Yet the answering tenderness in Martha's sweet eyes, the reciprocated pressure of her soft little hand, were ever present, changing everything, the most trifling circumstance now wearing a new aspect. For the first time in his simple, wholesome, unemotional existence he was

* E. A., farm-house scullery.

living intensely, at every moment conscious of self, the self called forth by deep feeling.

As he now awaited his brother at the abundantly spread tea-table—Dan was ever the waited for—he seemed in a dream.

Was it possible that he had taken a step sure as day follows night to sow discord between them, perhaps create an irreparable breach, divide them for ever? He well knew Dan's quietly masterful, unyielding disposition and he said to himself that he knew his own character also, that however much the other might gainsay and oppose him, Martha should become his wife, having gone so far he was not going to turn tail like a sneak.

"Have you seen Mr. Dan about, Saranne?" he asked of the heavy-browed, ungainly, youngish-oldish woman then setting the table, rather flinging down knives, forks and spoons with irritating and apparently irritated expeditiousness.

Circumspection was necessary in a pair of young bachelors keeping house for themselves. Sarah Ann, whose name, certainly with euphemistic result had thus been reduced by a syllable, was a pearl of great price, one of those invaluable serving-women now obsolete.

Austerity itself, never known, as the phrase went, to nannick with the men folk, able to maintain order in a garrison, she yet possessed a humorous turn, was apt at repartee and relished a bout of wit.

But churning day oft-times took the edge off these, rendering Saranne huffish and unsociable.

"Not I, Mr. Clem; neither feather nor bone of him."

And more viciously than before knives, forks and spoons rattled on the crockery.

"Did the butter come after all?"* asked the young man, this time speaking less from curiosity than nervousness. Uneasy in his mind, any diversion seemed welcome.

"Come? Mr. Clem, time it should, but that there churn and the rennet likewise are enough to make the stone cry out of the wall and the beam of the timber to answer it. From five o'clock this blessed mornin' till the men came home to dinner I was at it my hardest, and though I've as cool a hand for the butter as any female in the parish, this week's is only fit for the firkin. They're an uppish lot, these market-women, and last week Mrs. Frost wouldn't take it, beautiful as it was; 'If I can't have any eggs, I'll decline the butter,' said she."

"Were there no eggs then?" absently asked Clem.

"Mussy me, Mr. Clem, how you do run on, sure-ly! As if hens were to be circumvented when bent upon sittin'! And I don't know what's come over them, I never see'd such a sittiner lot; as I was a-sayin' to Mr. Dan, I shall want some more hen-coops afore long."

The last remark would have been unnoticed yesterday, this afternoon it galled. Thought Clem: "Am I then such a cypher in my own house that I am not even supposed capable of buying half a dozen hen-coops!"

"But there's Mr. Dan, I hear him a-scrapin' his shoes," exclaimed Saranne; "I must jump about or I shall get the length of his tongue, I lay."

Thereupon she skurried away, her alacrity increasing Clem's jealous mood. Neither Saranne nor even Ti-

* E. A., meaning, Has the churning proved successful?

mothy, the back-house boy, ever flew at his own bidding. For the first time he noticed or rather heeded the fact.

That second scraping of shoes did not last long. Danvers seldom wore high-lows, for the excellent reason that he worked very little on the land. In harvest time, certainly, he would help his brother to shock sheaves, and all the year round was not above measuring corn for the stockman, and doing other light jobs. But he never raked after the hay-waggon, carted clover or turnips, much less lent a hand with the plough. Nor in summer time would he take off his light tweed coat for the sake of freedom and coolness.

He must ever be spick and span from head to foot, always ape the gentleman-farmer. A gentleman-farmer, and no ill-favoured one, he looked indeed, and strikingly contrasted in appearance were the two brothers; Danvers neat featured, decided, punctilious, ever comporting himself as if the eye of the world were upon him, Clem perhaps equally good-looking, but never deemed so, natural advantage being discounted by his own diffidence and hobbledehoydenish ways.

Both had been sent to a private grammar school, but whilst, as Clem would say of himself, what had gone into one ear had gone out at the other, Danvers was generally looked upon as super-educated.

"A haughty boy, and that book-learned, he can spell like a parson," such was the verdict formerly passed upon him by old farming friends of his father's.

"I haven't kept you waiting long, I suppose?" he asked with the air of a man from whom apology would be mere supererogation. Then without awaiting a reply

he added: "I met Fenwick on the Ipswich road and stopped for a chat."

Self-absorbed as was Clem, he at once noticed a certain constraint in the other's manner, an indescribable air of hesitation.

Danvers' word was invariably law, but there were nevertheless propositions which he mooted delicately, subjects on which he deprecated even mute disapproval. He knew that to Clem his social ambitions savoured of something worse than infatuation.

The last meal of the day, that long tea of four courses, began with a beaker of strong home-brewed and bread and cheese; next followed richly creamed tea with bread and butter and a slice of ham, home-cured and pickled in spice and old harvest ale; thirdly, came apple-turnover; short-cakes, rusks and rich currant buns finishing the meal.

The second stage had been reached before Danvers spoke again, then he began, Clem listening curiously, wondering what in the world his brother looked so serious about.

"There's nothing particular to keep me at home next week that I know of, Clem, do you? So—" he got out the rest of his speech with a slight but wholly unmistakable blush—"I am going to run over to Paris with Fenwick for a few days."

"To—to—Paris?"

The younger brother might well drop his knife and fork and stare aghast as he spoke.

Such a proposal seemed more of an undertaking fifty years ago than a winter in the Polar or Antarctic regions at the present time. For these prosperous

tenant-farmers the word recreation hardly had meaning. Foreign travel was essentially part and parcel of high life; university training, fox-hunting, late dinners and seats in Parliament not more so.

Most well-to-do country folks contrived at some time or other to see London, here their experience of the world outside their own began and ended.

But changes were already in the air. A few young men after Danvers' pattern were now aping the gentleman-farmer or, rather, the gentleman, by little and little discarding old-fashioned ways and acquaintances; gradually, as homely critics put it, wriggling into genteel society, one at a time removing the landmarks their fathers had set up.

Thus Danvers seldom patronised his neighbours' yule-tide dances. The rosy-cheeked, buxom, unsophisticated damsels driving with their men-folk to Ipswich on market-day had no attraction for him. More to his taste were his friend Fenwick's sister Arabella, a slender, lackadaisical, boarding-school miss, and her bosom friend, Selina Atwell, the daughter of a conveyancing clerk, by Danvers always hyperbolically styled a solicitor.

Mr. Frederick Fenwick belonged to a class now fortunately obsolete, but at this period of Victorian history sufficiently numerous, in other words, he was an unqualified medical assistant.

Next best to being the rose, says the Persian proverb, is to live near it. If not, properly speaking, a member of the healing profession, at least Mr. Fenwick daily breathed its atmosphere.

As he was boarded and lodged under his patron's roof, and could not be decently tabled in the kitchen,

he imbibed gentility, became schooled in social etiquette, the art of conversation and worldly wisdom. Hence in Danvers' eye, the pseudo doctor was a very glass of fashion, a walking mirror invaluable to a neophyte like himself.

"To Paris, Dan?"

With almost horrified surprise Clem repeated the question. To his conservative, practical mind the other's notion seemed not only preposterous but reprehensible. A humble yet dignified set of men were these Suffolk farmers of two generations ago, content to go their own ways, unambitious of social advancement, and herein Clem resembled his forerunners.

"Well, France isn't at the antipodes, under our feet, you know that, I suppose," was the contemptuous retort.

Dan would often hurt Clem with his lack of book-learning and, truth to tell, poor Clem was terribly at sea in geographical and historical matters. Schooling had been wasted upon him as it is upon many another.

"I should think twice about it if I were you, Dan, that's all I can say."

"Oh, you're afraid of folks talking, I suppose."

"Of some folks," Clem put in meekly; "I suppose you wouldn't like it to get to Sir Brian's ears?"

So strictly had the tenant-farming world been hitherto wedded to routine, so rigid still were the demarcations separating middle-class from gentry that an initiative of this kind looked like impertinence. Thus it certainly looked to Clem.

"We pay Sir Brian his rent and a good rent too. If I followed the hounds or set up a brougham what in the world is that to him? The times are gone by for

bowing and scraping to one's landlord and I never was one of your lickspittling sort."

"I don't know after all why you shouldn't go," put in Clem, almost apologetically. A sudden thought had just struck him. What a relief to have Danvers out of the way, if only for a few days!

A more naturally affectionate brother never lived, but Danvers' strong will ever cowed him and just now he wanted to feel quite free, for a brief interval to have nobody's eye upon him, no possible reading of his thoughts.

"The thing is quite settled anyhow," Danvers went on coolly, "Fenwick's holiday begins on Wednesday and a friend of his who will manage everything is to meet us in London on that day. I shall not be away more than a week or ten days, and there is nothing very particular going on just now. The sheep-shearing you can see to as well as myself, but of course I'll tell you exactly how to go on before starting."

"Of course, of course. Don't hurry back, Dan, if you feel inclined to stay a bit longer," interrupted Clem, now as eagerly enthusiastic as Danvers himself; "you might as well make a fortnight of it when once there."

"Well, I shall see how my money goes," was the amiable reply. "Dear me, Clem, I can hardly believe that I am really going to Paris! I quite expect by the time I get back to have forgotten my mother-tongue."

"So soon as that, Dan?"

"Picking up a foreign language isn't so much a matter of time as of ability and I was always quick at learning, you know. I am half in the mind to go to

that old French master at Ipswich for a lesson or two before starting."

"I should think it might be a good thing, though for my part I'd as soon be a toad under a harrow or a pig caught in a gate as set to mumble outlandish jargon," Clem answered naïvely, Danvers smiling in his superior way as he listened. He might raise himself to the position of gentleman-farmer; mix in genteel society, ultimately marry a young lady who had been educated in a boarding-school and could play the piano, Clem would never change his habits or alter his way of looking at things, that was quite certain.

By this time the final course of the substantial yet most appetising tea had come to an end. The Derby cheese and sparkling ale, the spicy ham, the apple-turnover, the rusks and the cakes, all of superlative quality, had been duly relished and the young men rose from the table.

"You might as well run up to the mill and see about the bran, Clem," Danvers said; "we ought to have had it to-day."

Away went Clem treading on air. As soon as the tea-things were cleared away Danvers went to his bureau and took from an inner drawer two small packets.

Then settling himself in an elbow-chair, carefully and deliberately he examined the contents, now holding up one daguerreotype now another.

The coloured portraits taken by a process still startlingly new represented two girls in the first freshness of youth and both of a prettyishness and languorous charm that belonged to the epoch.

Miss Selina Atwell one would gather from her like-

ness was a tall young lady who held herself well. White as alabaster was her long, slender throat, equally fair and—must the truth be told?—almost as expressionless was her face, the rather long oval framed by drooping bands of hair so resplendently gold-brown, silken and wavy as to recall a retriever's ears. Brown too were Miss Selina's eyes, and if they did not shoot fiery glances or perpetually shine with the wild joy of living, they could doubtless shine encouragingly upon an admirer, above all, on a presumable wooer. Miss Selina had fingers of adorable ivoriness and symmetry but no jewel ever sparkled upon them, not even the most modest, unsuggestive schoolgirl's ring. "Never wear rings, my dear," she had once said sapiently to her bosom friend, Arabella Fenwick, "they hint at an engagement, quite possibly might keep likely men away."

Of a different type, yet not without strong points of resemblance, was the second daguerreotype.

Arabella Fenwick was a year or two younger than Selina and wanted her air of self-complacent satisfaction and ease of mind as to future prospects. The prettier and more engaging of the two, with pale blue eyes, rosy cheeks and red kissable lips that quite wooingly beamed upon the beholder, as if, indeed, almost inviting response of the other sex, a lover-like glance or tender word. In one respect the portraits were of a pattern. Easy enough to see that however much the friends might differ in outward appearance and character their outlook upon life was from a window of the same small proportions, their ideals were identical. Without fault of their own, mere creatures of circumstance and of the epoch, they saw in the young man now so closely scrutinising their

likenesses, a possible answer to every secret invocatic a realisation of fondest dreams. To be wooed by Danvers Fison was to fulfil one's destiny indeed!

But if the daguerreotypes were strikingly suggest of the period, hardly less so was the young man's a tude as he now studied, compared, criticised. delicious suspense was expressed in his scrutiny, tormenting doubt in his gestures or monosyllabic se communing. He knew well enough that he had or to give a sign and either foolish little heart would rapturously his. How to choose? Therein lay the dif culty. Which of the two girls would most becoming grace the position of Mrs. Danvers Fison?

CHAPTER IV.

"WOE WORTH THE DAY!"

NEXT day was Sunday and whilst the sisters were at church blind Rose sat on the door-step cogitating his sermon. As yet Burghersh possessed no meeting-house, but lay-preachers held Methodist services on Sunday evenings all the year round, a gig-house accommodating them during the summer, some neighbour's kitchen in winter.

Morning service at the parish church was chiefly attended by the gentry, farmers and tradesmen, labouring folk, chapel-goers with the rest, swelling the congregation of afternoons.

"If his reverence's sermon is not always what I should term Gospel preaching," Uncle Jethro had again and again declared to his fellow co-religionists, "it is a sight deal better than none at all." So as he was an authority in the place, and it was a question of going to church or staying at home, his advice was followed. The rector, on the other hand, did not very well see how he could harangue people who showed such a spirit of compromise.

The Reverend Mr. Shafto was less masterful than his neighbour of Oxborrow. Wealth, position and perhaps a latitudinarian disposition rendered him easy-going and

affable. He was a man too who dearly loved a joke, and would often banter the old fish-salesman concerning his arrogation of clerical authority.

"Come now, Master Rose," he had said more than once, "instead of paying for a *locum tenens* when I take my holiday this year, I will lend you my pulpit, honour bright, I will, my pocket would be saved and the bishop himself wouldn't draw such a congregation. That I'll warrant."

With proud humility blind Rose would make reply:—

"Every vat must stand on its own bottom, your reverence, but thirsty souls may be refreshed from a quart pot as well as from a kilderkin."

The blind man regarded his vocation as a preacher from a lofty standpoint. The conviction that he reached the inner selves of those round him gave suppressed but deepest joy. The composition of a sermon cost him hours of patient thought, especially when they were topical, some incident calling for reproof or exhortation.

On this especial morning such was the case. That extra sense possessed or acquired by the blind, that perception of something unusual going on around, something unbetrayed by word or any sound, to-day troubled him and set him thinking. For the first time since making his home with Martha and Adah he felt that something was being concealed, projects were in the air of which he was to know nothing.

The younger sister was ever a bit hoity-toity, in local parlance a little rip, her usually high spirits and kittenish ways hardly surprised him, but what had come over Martha? Whilst reading the usual portion of Scripture to him after breakfast she had misread common words

and again and again lost her place. Furthermore the mildest possible rebuke had evoked a tearful breakdown. Never had he known his favourite niece in such a mood.

Yes, he mused, mischief was in the air. Unless he found means to counteract evil influences Adah's giddy companions would lead the pair astray. To-night's discourse should be a warning.

His mind was a veritable magazine of Biblical and Bunyan lore, and he chose for text, the words, "Woe worth the day," for illustration the famous simile of the muck-rake and the golden crown from *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Having settled the matter so far he began the work of composition, from time to time breaking off, drinking in the fragrance and melody of the mild forenoon. Primroses and violets bloomed in the little terraced garden. He could not see them but he knew they were there, and alongside the box-bordered path he pictured the daffydowndillies soon to appear in all their splendour, the yellow stone-crop called "Welcome home, husband," in those parts, the ruby and orange polyanthus or Jack behind the garden gate, the bluish-green odoriferous southernwood, the daisy, faithful friend of the poor. How the thought of these lovely things cheered and soothed! And very soon skylark and thrush would herald the spring.

Perhaps the divine Milton did not more religiously or thankfully appreciate the beautiful world he could no longer behold or those glories perceptible to the sightless than did the old fish-salesman as he now sunned himself on his doorstep. And when his sermon was put together and got by heart he yielded himself to a dreamy

mood, almost ecstatically inhaling sweet smells and heeding sweet sounds. To repine at his fate would surely have been the height of ingratitude. Had not his reverence and her ladyship assured him that he should never go into the house* and had not God accorded him the gift of moving speech, power over the souls of men? Rather he counted himself favoured of Providence despite that often reiterated simile of the unprofitable vessel.

Meantime as the sisters walked home from church, each for the first time felt constrained in the other's presence.

"Now don't go and say anything afore uncle about May Fair and my being asked to help Triffie at the Barley Mow," Adah got out as they approached the house. "I'm going and it's of no use for him or anyone else to make a piece of work——"

"Oh! Adah, when uncle is so set against it——"

Then Martha stopped short and coloured. How could she play the monitress to her sister?

Adah's contemplated offence, a day at the Fair, would lead to no harm and be soon forgotten; but, she knew it well enough, in a very different and much more serious light would uncle Jethro regard her own conduct, this underhand intercourse with a man above her in station.

"There, there," Adah retorted with a toss of the head, "I, for one, am not a-going to keep my nose on the grindstone year in and year out, and there's to be a leg of mutton on a greased pole climbed for. Lawk's a daisy, what fun to see the bors tumbling head over heels and sprawling on all fours."

The very thought set her laughing and it was with

* The poor-house.

difficulty that she checked herself at the garden gate. Martha said no more.

In her quiet sedate way Martha laid the cloth, Adah meantime noisily lending a hand, then the trio sat down to dinner, the old man questioning them narrowly as to hymns, text and other particulars of the service.

For his own part he rarely attended the parish church, one of the girls or a neighbour leading him in the afternoon to a small Methodist chapel three miles off. When about to preach he remained at home. To-day therefore both sisters were relieved of what often seemed to the younger an irksome duty. The short afternoon service over, Adah set off for a ramble with one or two companions, Martha, a vague excuse on her lips, tremulously taking another direction. She had never realised till now the arduousness of the crooked path, the countless difficulties besetting stratagem and double dealing. For was she not herein deceiving not only her uncle and her sister but her patron on whose good opinion she depended for daily bread?

With a mind half made up that this stolen interview should be both first and last she approached the trysting-place. Timid as a bird in sight of scattered crumbs, at every forward step she glanced hither and thither. Now she stood stock-still scared by the noise of squirrel overhead or some hedgeling chirping amid the bushes, now she looked back as if about to retrace her way, every movement heightening alike dread and anticipation.

And equally timorous was the dapper young farmer as yet unseen but within earshot. To Clem Fison love-making was as new as to the schoolmistress, as unversed was he in subterfuge and plot-weaving. Anxiously he

glanced hither and thither as he sidled through the coppice-wood. But never was woodland retreat better suited to the present purpose. The small enclosed coppice lay between ten-acre fields all to-day deserted. Only the squirrels and little twittering birds kept them company, whilst high above rooks cawed as they wheeled across the breezy heavens.

And when at last they met shyness overcame every other feeling.

The young man could only meet Martha's sweet eyes with a hearty handshake and a resounding kiss. The veriest bumpkin of a hudderen*. could not have shown less aptitude for gallantry.

"I knew you would come, my dear," he got out at last, then for want of something better to say he repeated, "I knew you would come."

"Then you knew more than myself, Mr. Clem," Martha replied, her lover's nervousness acting as a fillip "but I didn't like to write by post and I wanted to say that I've come first and last and that you mustn't put any more posies on the schoolroom sill——"

"Will you hold your tongue, miss?" exclaimed Clem advancing for another kiss, Martha drawing back coyly Then he produced a little box of the old-fashioned sweetmeats called kisses, each folded in coloured paper and having a motto.

"I'll shut your mouth leastways," he added. "Sit down, shut your eyes, open your mouth and see what shall send you."

Playfully forcing her on to the mossy bank with one arm round her neat little waist, with his disengaged

* E. A., hobbledehoy.

hand he took out a bonbon, when lo! neither knew exactly how it happened, box and contents lay scattered on the grass.

On all fours went both, in the hasty scramble cheeks and lips touching as if by merest accident. Heated, breathless, but now feeling as if they had known each other for years, they sat down, degustating their sugar-plums and making merry over the rhymes, so many fortunes told in doggerel.

"That's pat anyhow," Clem said, smoothing one tiny slip on his knee; "hark, you'd have laid a wager the chap who wrote this ditty had us in his mind—

> 'Straight ahead, Love leads the way,
> Not the king can say him nay!' "

But Martha's face fell as she read her second motto,

> "Be ye wary, as ye pass,
> Snakes lie hidden in the grass."

"And that's pat too, Mr. Clem," she began, her sage little discourse discounted by her all too tell-tale eyes, sweeter, more love-lorn eyes had never maiden, "as I was saying just now, I mustn't meet you any more. What my feelings are for you I cannot say, but I'm a poor girl and you're a gentleman——"

"I mean well by you, true as my name is Clement Fison, I do."

"I shouldn't be sitting with you here if I hadn't felt sure of that, Mr. Clem; but what I've just said is the truth and we can't get over it, and his reverence——"

Clem turned red as fire. The daringness of his step now for the first time forced itself upon his mind. The

spell cast upon him by Martha's eyes, the more than endearingness of those initiatory kisses made him reckless and determined to be happy at any price.

"Look you here, Martha," he said, his speech now voluble as her own, "the parson I suppose has been kicking up a bobbery about those flowers. When I give you leave to tell him, and it shan't be long, you just say, 'Please Mr. Paglar, Clem Fison is going to ask me in church, and if you won't take my word for it, go to him yourself.'"

"Mr. Clem, were I a lady born nothing but death should part us, but as I was not born to ride in a gig and wear a silk dress I should always be looked down upon by my betters and you."

Too much for the simple little schoolmistress was the vision her lover's words had called forth. That Clem loved her seemed unbelievable. That she should sit beside him in his gig on market days seemed still more of dreamland. Overcome with joy she could only sob and smile, Clem's tongue now running glibly on, his hurried sentence punctuated in the lover's usual way.

"As if I should stay here for you to be looked down upon or me either! I'll tell you what I've been thinking on," here he dropped his voice as if the very trees had ears, "I shall clear out of Oxborrow altogether, and take a little occupation Woodbridge or Eye way, but till I tell you everything is settled, wist! Dan is going to cross the water on Wednesday, you just meet me here again in the afternoon——"

"Won't there be harrowers in yonder wheatfield?"

"Harrowers after three o'clock, silly?"

Nothing more intoxicates a maiden than her sweet-

heart's first word of familiarity, the hint of that closest intimacy to come. A playful reproach, a diminutive or pet name of his own coining, how sweet and flattering are these! Not the most flowery love-making could have pleased Martha more than the fondly uttered "silly," accompanied of course by a kiss.

"Uncle may call for me at the school," she stammered, hardly knowing why.

"Then get one of the brats to lead him home and say you're wanted on the way. But I mustn't tarry now, I shall have Dan getting back first and wondering where on earth I have got to. Till Wednesday then. If only Wednesday were to-morrow, if only Michaelmas were here, if only——"

Eloquence failing him, he again kissed her and with such impassioned reiteration that, flushed and discomposed, she drew back and tore herself away, only once looking back.

And then not to encounter a nod or wave of the hand. Post-haste Clem hurried through the little thicket, his evident trepidation arousing uneasiness.

"He is afraid of Mr. Dan," she said to herself, "and no wonder, Mr. Dan will never——" "let his brother go to church with me," was on her mind, but Clem's outspokenness and fervour brought conviction.

It was this shiftiness and obligation of secrecy that weighed upon her mind. Her uncle's infirmity had ever rendered her sensitive in dealing with him. She could not endure the thought that she should now hear his exhortation in the evening and ignore it next day.

For she knew it well enough. Nothing could more shock and disconcert him than the fact of stolen inter-

course with one above her in station. When indeed had a well-to-do farmer wedded a labourer's daughter? When had such courtships ended at the altar?

Already Martha asked herself if Clem's golden promises could possibly be kept, if indeed the second motto would not prove prophetic.

Nor was Adah hardly more at her ease as she set out for chapel, thus was service called, although to-night taking place in a neighbour's cottage.

Adah had almost as much reason to feel dissatisfied as Martha.

Blind Rose had the Puritan's horror of Vanity Fair and Madam Bubble. Fair-going with giglets and roysterers was almost as hateful to him as the notion of a girl "frequenting her betters," in other words, listening to the flattering tongue of one occupying a superior station. And both girls knew by experience that uncle Jethro possessed as has been said a kind of divination. He always realised what was going on around him. No matter their efforts at secrecy, they found themselves indirectly called to account.

The improvised meeting-house was a big bare kitchen with brick well-sanded floor, whitewashed walls and small diamond-paned casements having dimity curtains. Underneath the one window stood a side-table holding Family Bible, a hymn-book or two, a pair of candlesticks and japanned snuffers and tray. An upright clock, a long deal table and half a dozen Windsor chairs made up the furniture. For the general accommodation forms had been borrowed from the dame-school, the younger folks squatting on the broad brick hobs of the open fireplace.

Blind Rose enjoyed a high reputation as Gospel preacher.

He never discoursed to a scant or listless congregation, and fast as tongues wagged whilst awaiting him, no sooner did he appear at the garden gate than all became still as mice.

Bodily infirmity was not always so tenderly treated by these villagers. Without intending unkindness or brutality, neighbours made fun of each other's personal defects. A squint, bandy legs, dwarfish statue called forth raillery and jokes that were seldom taken amiss.

But sightlessness was a misfortune that appealed to the roughest. The fish-salesman's austerity and deep religiousness hedged him round with respect amounting to awe. In his presence the incorrigible wag, the veriest reprobate, kept guard over himself.

And if these did not swell his congregation they often hovered about the place in which he preached, standing as they did to-night by the open door.

It was a striking scene, that cottage interior with its rustic audience and blind preacher. The door opening onto the box-bordered path and flower garden stood wide. Around it were grouped a dozen listeners, mostly young men and hudderens who preferred to come and go as they pleased, whilst inside, the men in best corduroys, the women wearing shawls and straw bonnets crossed with ribbon, occupied chairs and forms according to age.

Standing with his face to the fire-place, a brother-preacher acting the part of deacon, was blind Rose, the habitual passivity and resignation of his face to-day somewhat cast off, taking their place a look almost of

proud assertiveness. The humble fish-hawker felt hir self enlarged by his calling, the message he had to gi his fellows rendering humility out of place.

"Woe worth the day, a cloudy day."

The blind man's voice was neither flexible nc sonorous, but so solemnly, with such penetrating ir sistence did he repeat the awful words that his heare thought of the prophet Ezekiel and of his maledictio Awe-struck all listened to oft-repeated warning again wrong-doing, warnings perhaps clothed in the very sam language, illustrated by the very same parables, yet nor the less telling.

Pale, rigid, feeling almost on the point of a fair Martha sat out the sermon, Adah by her side fidgetir like a restless child.

"A cutting discourse you've given us to-night, Mast Rose," said a neighbour, as leaning on Martha's ar the old man passed out.

"Pray God others may find it so to their sou good," he replied, the sisters trembling as the wor struck home.

CHAPTER V.

SERIO-COMIC.

A FEW days later the school was closed. Instead of spelling out the history of Bob Lee and his dog Red Leg, of laboriously achieving strokes and pot-hooks under Martha's mild rule, or listening to Miss Sophia's gentle voice as she read of Prince Lee Boo, bors and mors were afield. Newly breeched urchins, little maids just old enough to dandle a doll, alike the robust and the sickly, the alert and the weak of intellect, were now enrolled in the stone-picking gang, a system of indentured child-labour disgracing English annals within the memory of many living. Two women whose names live in story and in song, had raised their voices on behalf of factory children and little beings born into slavery. "The Cry of the Children" and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* awoke echoes throughout England and the civilised world. It was not till almost a generation later that a blind statesman—all honour to his memory!—moved by the recollection of his seeing days, wiped away this foul blot from our rural life.

Stone-picking took place in March, not unfrequently here the bleakest, most nipping month of the twelve. White with hoar-frost would be the wind-swept fallow, often accompanied by snow and hail were the gusts blowing from north and east. And if indeed the blossom of the blackthorn showed against a blue sky and in

sheltered nooks white and purple violets shed fragrance, no sunshine or pleasantness reached the bare windy cornfield.

Soon after seven o'clock, whilst happier bantlings still slept in warm beds and cots, the long straggling procession would be on the march, laggards being hurried forward by means of a stout stick. Here and there an adult might be seen above the heads of the children, some widow glad to add her eightpence a day to her childrens' fourpenny bit, or some "three quarter man" or labourer incapacitated by age or infirmities for regular farm work. From eight till five, nine hours by the clock, a brief interval being allowed for so-called dinner, the gang-master—almost of itself does the name Legree slip from my pen—kept his people at work.

Whilst unruly or lazy boys would get what was called "a good tight hiding," in other words, a beating with Master Turtle's cudgel, pert, unskilful little girls of five or six would wince or scream under many a hard rap. But stone-picking was a contract. Master Turtle's business was to get a certain field cleared of stones in a certain time and of course he farmed the gang with the maximum profit to himself. If a mother interfered on behalf of her offspring his answer was curt and to the point.

"Then don't ask me to take 'em on another year, that's all."

By the children themselves stone-picking was regarded with mixed feelings. "Teacher's cane," as they expressed it, "was a flea-bite to Master Turtle's leather-in's, and pickin' up stones all day on hands and knees, my, how it made the back ache!"

Certain compensations there were. When the gang-master was in good humour, during the dinner hours girls and boys—"little warmints," as he now called them—would he set running races or scrambling for farthings, wherewith to buy treacle suckers as toffee was called in those parts. And joy of joys! when stone-picking came to an end, with the combined earnings of mother and children boots were mended and wardrobes repaired. The girls got new shifts of whitey-brown calico, their brothers new highlows and a suit of Sunday corduroys.

So day after day, Master Turtle's gang of stone-pickers might be seen, the spectacle being taken as a matter of course. The fields had to be cleared somehow and as gentlefolks said, how good for growing children to spend the day out of doors! They saw and heard a good deal that was bad for them no doubt, but who could help that? Master Turtle could not pick and choose when making up his gang, and poor folk's children could not be wrapt up in cotton wool. Thus even philanthropic betters summed up the matter.

It was with mixed feelings also that Martha locked the school-room door, wondering or rather hardly daring to wonder under what conditions she should next turn the key. If indeed she had not already done so for the last time! "Remember what I said to you last week. Ruminate on my words," the rector had observed just before.

"I am not likely to do anything else, your reverence," was the meek but evasive reply. What other answer, indeed, had Martha to give? She was drifting she knew not whither. Clem, abiding by his word, openly acknowledging her as his wife to be, what objection could

Mr. Paglar urge? She would surely be allowed to go on teaching as usual?

The second alternative was a disturbing one. If Clem insisted upon secrecy and the obligation of stolen interviews, how could she resume her work? For the rector's utterance had been categorical. There was no middle course. She must give up one or the other. Clem or the school—love or daily bread!

Well, stone-picking would last three weeks. Danvers would remain absent for at least a fortnight, meanwhile why trouble herself? Why try to settle what she knew of her own accord she never could settle? By the time school was opened again she should know her fate.

The lovers' *poste restante* was a pollard oak in a drift or wooded lane, Clem's boyish scrawls and Martha's prim little missives being wedged between the sides of a cleft, then covered with chips.

Danvers had been gone about a week when she found half a dozen lines that set her heart beating quickly, she hardly knew whether with delight or apprehension. That same afternoon she was to take tea with him, Clem wrote. Saranne would be at a relation's funeral; Master Wix, odd man who pottered indoors and out, would be busy in the neat-house, and Timothy, the backhouse boy, he'd take good care should not show his face within half a mile of the premises either. "Nothing in the world to prevent you," he wrote; "just hang a fish basket on your arm, for all the world as if you were bringing me a couple of mackerel, and come to the side door."

Of course Martha hesitated, first deciding one thing, then another; now making up her mind that no, on no

account could she do such a thing, she should faint of fright on the threshold; now coming to the conclusion that refusal would imply want of confidence in herself and mistrust of her lover. Was she not moreover his betrothed? Had he not promised to make her his wife?

Flustered, almost breathless with excitement as she was on entering the keeping-room, Clem's high spirits and perfect ease set her mind at rest. Seeing that he regarded the adventure so complacently she could but follow his cue, ashamed of former scruples. Clem was indeed more than unconcerned, he was hilarious.

"Isn't it a prime joke?" he said, when he had made her lay aside bonnet and shawl and sit down behind the tea-pot. "I wonder what old Dan would say if he were to pop in unawares! But I should be ready to get under the table if he did! And Saranne has eyes in the back of her head, so I told her to set for two in case Uncle Ephraim should be this way——"

"You don't think he will, Mr. Clem?" Martha exclaimed, looking aghast.

"Now don't begin to be afraid of this, that or the other, but enjoy yourself. How nice to see you sitting there, and when we have done tea I will show you over the house; but it will never be our house, you know. Master Dan, who is a high-flier, will bring some fine lady here, piano and all, and you and I must content ourselves with a pork and what farm* miles off where we are not known."

He rattled on, Martha smiling demurely, not even dismayed by the last suggestive remark, as she poured out his tea and he helped her to apple-turnover. The

* *I.e.*, a poor little farm only admitting of pork for dinner.

mention of the elder brother had usually sobering effect. To-night, however, Clem was not to be so subdued. A sense of liberty, the endearing sight of Martha's neat little figure at the head of the table, the tenderness and appeal of her eyes drove away disconcerting thoughts. He felt, too, so much better satisfied with himself than he had ever been before; thus is individuality enlarged, life dignified by the duality of love!

They had done ample justice to the bread and butter and apple turnover, Clem was cutting Martha a goodly hunk of plum-cake when she started up, crimsoning, breathless, almost speechless, with fright.

"Hark!" was all she could stammer, holding up one hand as she spoke.

True enough, gig-wheels sounded on the gravel walk.

"Uncle Ephraim as I live," gasped Clem, quite unmanned, "we're in for it and no mistake!"

His look of utter helplessness put Martha on her mettle. Not thinking of herself, perhaps a ruined self in consequence of this imprudence, quick as lightning she devised the screening of her lover.

"You say the backhouse boy is not about," she exclaimed, as she spoke whipping up her own cup and plate, "then you'll have to take out the horse yourselves. Keep your uncle in the gighouse or that side of the house for a ten good minutes. I'll put the table straight in a jiffy, then slip out the back way whilst you bring him in by the front."

"Uncle Ephraim always comes in at the back, he'd suspect something. I tell you we're in for it," Clem almost groaned.

"That's a store-room, isn't it, between this and the kitchen? when I've done, I'll just go in there and pop out as soon as the keeping-room door is shut, but you must potter about for ten minutes."

Trying not to look like the veriest culprit awaiting sentence, he obeyed. Martha, as if helped by some good fairy swiftly re-arranged the tea-table.

When a quarter of an hour later Clem returned with his visitor he found everything in apple-pie order, not the faintest indication of an earlier guest. He had been disturbed in the middle of his meal, that was all.

Timidly as some little four-footed creature hiding from a foe, Martha shut herself up in her retreat, Clem and his visitor scraping their shoes at the back door five minutes later.

"I'd begun tea, Uncle," she heard Clem say in a loud warning voice.

"Lawks a mussy, Clem, bor," answered the bluff old farmer, "who'd have thought that my takin' you unbeknown would have put you so about! you look for all the world as baffled as a pig in a pound."

"Well, you see, Uncle, just at that minute I wasn't exactly looking for you."

"I like that," was the rejoinder, accompanied by a hearty laugh. "Why, I met Saranne just as I was a-turnin' into the Ipswich road and she said, said she, Mr. Clem is all livin' alone and told me to set a tea-cup for you, he'll be as pleased as Punch if you drive round his way."

Clem stammered an excuse, then to her intense relief Martha heard the keeping-room door put to, with equal satisfaction on peeping out she saw that her way

was clear, alike kitchen and backhouse* door stood wide. Of set purpose Clem had left the way clear.

Noiselessly emerging from her covert, peeping hither and thither, she darted forth, the next moment to make desperate retreat, escape barred by an unlooked-for and most formidable opponent.

In facilitating egress Clem had not thought of possible intruders, the inquisitive, unceremonious feathered rovers outside, all familiar with the backhouse door and only too ready to enter when opportunity offered.

Clucking hens and chicks Martha would not have heeded, but no sooner did the store-room door open when a turkey-cock, fierce as a horse-dog scenting a prowler, flew at her, his outstretched wings, his rapidly crimsoning wattles, his infuriated gobble, gobble, gobble, making poor Martha ready to faint. Turkeys, like the Capitoline geese, were good watch-dogs and could distinguish between home-folk and strangers. This one seemed well aware that she had no business on the premises. In an agony of mental and bodily terror she waited, every second rendering her position more desperate. To fight her way out was to incur tell-tale mischief, perhaps bodily injury, the commotion bringing out Clem's visitor; to remain was to risk discovery, for very soon people would be about, stockmen fetching corn from the granary, backhouse boy bringing in faggots from the woodhouse, and sure enough someone taking Saranne's place in the neat-house.

Summoning up courage, feeling that come what might she must get out of the house, she once more opened the door, this time the gobbler's attitude being more ag-

* Or baccus, containing bake-oven, pump and sink.

gressive than before. Faster he flapped his outstretched wings, redder grew his inflated wattles and more menacing his gobble, gobble, gobble. Stifling a scream back she rushed into the store-room.

Panting, sobbing to herself, inwardly castigating her folly in coming, she waited, the enemy now attacking the door, threatening her very retreat, when lo! to her inexpressible relief she heard Clem outside. Shutting in his visitor, with a crome stick he drove back the assailant, then opening the door an inch, with a sign he motioned her towards the front door. She was evidently to go out that way. So utterly disconcerted and wretched looked Clem that Martha almost forgot her anxieties in his own. And, of course, her simple mind and fond heart were now occupied with her lover's safety.

Sobered, ruthlessly brought back to realities by the sight of his altered face, no longer the face of an hour ago, away she went, not hastening as if for dear life. Such a course would have been the height of indiscretion. Still trembling from head to foot she walked slowly and demurely down the garden path, her fish-basket, brought as a blind, conspicuously displayed. Once off the premises she quickened her pace, almost running till she reached the covert of a well-hedged field. As a bird escaped from feline claws or cruel gin will utter piteous cries and desperately shake its feathers after all danger is past, so Martha now lived over again the last dreadful moments. Flushed, gasping for breath, every nerve jarred, she long strove to compose herself in vain.

"Woe worth the day, a cloudy day!" Again and again her uncle's text came back to her, the words having a doubled and agonised meaning.

CHAPTER VI.

MAY FAIR.

THERE was one feature of May Fair to which Burghers youth and the world in general looked forward with especial zest. The fair itself never lost charm. Could land and sea and all that in them is, as the catechism says, show a grander sight than the turnpike-road then? Shire folk might brag as they pleased, no finer bullocks or primer sheep were reared anywhere than those driven to Ipswich Fair. Before the ploughman was afield with his team or the farmer had fed his poultry and pigs drove after drove filed by, glossy red hides and white fleeces set off by blue sky and green hedges. And was the entire animal world destined to gentle treatment and final euthanasia who would not rejoice in the page?

The fascination in question however had nothing do with such sights. An uncommon feature of the an occasion alike piquant and provocative, put the swains on their mettle and often brought about a in a tea-cup.

Just beyond the village stood the Barley Mowing place of jobbers or cattle dealers on a small carriers, drovers, and fair-goers. To-day the open in front of the ale-house was transformed. Boot sprung up as if by magic, spotless white cloths

ong tables spread with cakes, French plums, costing a penny the saucerful, gooseberry-fool and other dainties, whilst dispensing these were ever the prettiest and sprightliest girls in the village. The innkeeper, an acute man with an eye to business, always took care that upon such occasions the vendors should prove even a greater attraction than their wares. In the first place his maidens must have a ready wit and an aptitude for repartee, and in the second they must be worth looking it, not of the betwixt and between, girls, as the phrase went, who were "not amiss with their veils drawn or at a distance." The fore-court of the Barley Mow became for the nonce a tournament of wit, beauty and adulation. Now not only was Adah Rose called by village censors "the most outdacious mawther going," ever ready for nannicking and with a pat answer always on her tongue, she was also the general admiration of the other sex, her hair, black as the raven's wing, her dark eyes and long pale face having the charm of rarity. No typical village belle either was Triffie or Tryphena, Mr. Cage's niece, to-day pressed into his service. Instead of a face round and rosy as a pippin and eyes blue as tea-saucers she also was a tall brunette, "that slender," folks said, "you could span her waist with your hand, and with a tongue that sharp, my! it could sting like hulver* and stick to you like a harvest bug."

Both girls were dressed alike, Mr. Cage always insisted on such uniformity, and well they set off their new stuff dresses of Waterloo blue, turn-down white linen collars and pink neck-ribbons. Soon they were doing a

* Holly.

brisk business, the tent ringing with Triffie's sh wit and Adah's pleasantries. "Confound the rips,' a bystander to his neighbour as he passed out, mawther for miles round can hold a candle tc one or t'other."

Old customers, of course, did not fail to drav the swinging sign to-day, outside attractions en the cool, sanded parlour. A couple of as fine the country could show, and with a pat answer fo one, French plums in syrup and other dainties w every-day fare.

"If so be you think you're a-goin' to pass th house to-day without pullin' up, Sammie, you're f mistaken."

Thus saying, Ben Catchpole, the village w down his half-emptied glass of ginger-pop and s a shabby gig having a shabby driver. Sammie, s by the ever-licensed Ben, although a pork an farmer,* was entitled to a county vote, the churchwarden and hence the title of Mister. near man was Sam Weedon, folks twitting him wit a nip-cheese, a skin-flint to his face. And althoug ing on fifty and by no means insensible to female so folks said, Sam remained a bachelor, another of raillery. Again, Sam's appearance was odd, a ness ever evoked mirth and what passed for wi

When Ben Catchpole and his emulators wo clare him to be thin "as one board clapped to call him spindle-shanked, lanthorn-jawed, it was a and for the most part received, with perfect good

* E. A., a poor peddling farmer supposed to live u and what else he could get.

But there were two subjects on which Sam could ill brook banter, much more sarcasm. He did not like being jeered at about his saving habits or his unreturned admiration for the other sex. For more than once the springtide had lightly turned the bachelor's fancy to thoughts of love.

"Have a care, can't you see I'm in a deuce of a hurry," he said, lightly flicking the intruder with his whip.

"You won't get over me so easily as that to-day, nohow," continued Ben, seizing the bridle. "Don't you see Triffie a-waitin' with her saucers and Adah a-starin' with both eyes. But things have gone up since last year," here he winked slyly at the fair vendors. "Taxes have been taken off windows and put upon plums. A penny a saucerful last year, sixpence this."

Now, as has been said, Sam Weedon, although a shy man, admired wit and beauty as much as the veriest village Lovelace going, nor was he insensible to the pleasures of the palate. But he had no notion of paying sixpence for a pennyworth.

"Let be, I say," said Sam, "I've that to do that's pendin'."*

"Come, come, Mr. Weedon," put in Mr. Cage, the alehouse-keeper, jocosely, he was also a bit of a wag. "If so be that you're in a tearin' hurry, one of the mawthers, I lay, will serve you in your gig, aye, and feed you like a babe if you like."

"No sooner said than done!" Adah cried, and quitting her post under the tent, straight she went up to the gig, bystanders cheering lustily.

* *I.e.*, won't wait.

"There, don't choke yourself, Mr. Weedon, I'm not paid to stand here a pound a minute," she said, "and it's a right down pleasure to wait on you, it is indeed," she added.

Now, nothing loth, the farmer spooned away, smacking his lips over the syrupy conserve. Adah had ever seemed to him the one damsel in the place worth running after, and, according to repute, not lavish in her favours.

Well, indeed, might the shy, elderly bachelor be flattered. Bare-headed under the burning sun stood this handsome, high-spirited young woman, by some acclaimed the village paragon, waiting on him. But highly as he appreciated Adah's attention he was not going to be made a butt of, out came his penny.

"Extra sweet, those stewed plums," he said gallantly then, with a sly look at Ben, "sixpence, are they? then I'll owe you the odd fivepence till next May Fair."

Flicking his horse, off he drove, a general laugh following him, this time at the wag's expense. "I wouldn't always be trying to make others look foolish if I were you, Ben Catchpole," Adah exclaimed sharply.

"I'll never do it again, never no more, if you just once let me try it on with you," was the reply; "honour bright, I won't."

"Oh! are you?" came Adah's prompt retort, "I'm ready. Dare me to do this, that or t'other and you'll see what you get for your pains."

"A wager, let's hear the wager," shouted a dozen voices, loungers crowding round the booth.

In the midst of the uproar and excitement a couple of bullocks strayed into the inn-yard. The slightly constructed tents had to be protected against such invaders

It was some minutes before order was restored, and neither by hook nor by crook could anyone then learn the result of Adah's challenge. Folks threw out hints and innuendos, guessed and guessed again, to no purpose. Soon other exciting incidents put the matter out of their heads.

The day's exhilaration was not nearly over yet. No sooner had the last drove of cattle passed the Barley Mow than Adah and Triffie donned bonnet and shawl and hied to the fair. Adah knew well enough what was in store for her on returning home. Uncle Jethro's reproaches would send her tearful and humbled to bed. The sight of a man seven feet high, and of a woman weighing twenty stone, a ride in the merry-go-round, above all the smock race and greased pole would more than compensate for a scolding. And both girls were sure of meeting admirers and of being treated to oranges, ginger-bread, nuts and ginger-beer. "Why, moreover, should uncle Jethro look down on the fair?" said Adah to her companion, the quality liked it as well as poor folks.

True enough one clerical phaëton after another overtook them on the Ipswich road. First there came Mr. Paglar with Miss Sophia, having two of the younger children on their knees, and an older boy and girl behind, their faces shining with expected pleasure. Upon such occasions the best behaved of the troop were granted a half-holiday and sixpence each to spend, the rector always accompanying them round the booths. Hardly had Adah and Triffie curtseyed to his reverence than Mr. Shafto's much smarter equipage followed, her ladyship, the rector's mother-in-law, seated beside him, whilst behind rode a man-servant in livery. Again and lower

than before the girls curtseyed. Adah remarking th she would part with one of her own eyes if her un could but have it that moment.

"He'd see for himself," she said in her blunt wa "that what's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gand Folks who sit down to dinner at five o'clock with a fo man behind them run after sights just as fast as such we who live on fat pork and dumplins. But for all l religion uncle Jethro is always hardest on his own."

A brave show was that May Fair of by-gone da and Adah had nicely hit upon a striking feature. Fi years ago the country clergyman was an autocrat, t village rector a lesser Czar. No seigneur abbot of feu times was treated with more deference by his serfs th rough, homely Mr. Paglar by his parishioners. T squire himself was not bobbed to more respectfully the children, nor did he receive more obsequious pulli of the forelock from grandsires.

Fair-day broke down social barriers. The unwont bustle, the raree-shows, the atmosphere of holiday, once levelled conventionalities. Rich and poor, wise a simple were hail fellow well met.

Had the good old town of Gippiswick been beflagg from end to end in honour of a royal marriage or fam victory, had all the bells of its almost countless churc been set a-ringing, had barrels of old harvest ale be tapped at every street corner, the general temper co hardly have been more rollicking and the feeling brotherhood more genuine. Elbowing their way betwe glittering booths genteel folks now fraternised with th humbler neighbours. The woman weighing twenty sto the man rising seven feet or, as the handbill cautiou

stated, just upon it in his stockings, the mountebank in black and orange tights standing on a fellow's head, made the whole world kin, the engaging imp of seven in Highland dress who mounted on a platform shrilly recited "My name is Norval, on the Grampian hills," and other poetic gems, the drum summoning to wax-work, panoramas of the battle of Waterloo, and of the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots, penny shots at a target, last but not least the stalls, turned the strongest heads. Here, piled high, delicacies made every mouth water, whilst toydom had poured out its treasures in equal profusion. Jews' harps, Jacks in the box, Dutch dolls, penny whistles, whirligigs for little bors and mors, huswives, chapbooks, garters and braces for their elders soon loosened purse rings. No one of course went away without a pocketful of fairings for those at home.

"I say, Triffie," said Adah, when the pair had been treated to ginger-beer by one swain, to a ride in the merry-go-round by another; had paid two-pence to see the fat woman and the giant; had breathlessly heard "My Father's name is Norval" recited by the shrill-voiced imp of seven in kilt and bonnet; when, indeed, they had exhausted the wonder-horn. "I say, Triffie," said Adah.

"Say on, Adah."

"If you dare me to do it, I'll run in the smock race."

"You would not be so low-lived as that neither, Adah, a-sweatin' and blowin' with town mawthers."

"Now don't put on parts, Triffie, and pretend to be that genteel. We don't run in our smocks, and as to sweatin' and blowin' don't Miss Sophia and the young

ladies from the hall do that when they play "Drop the handkerchief" with the children at the school treat? Low-lived, indeed, what are such as we?"

"If so be that you're a-goin' to let yourself down so, the sooner we part company the better, Adah, that's all I can say and I'll hie home."

"Well, you're not above watchin' the hudderens* climb the greased pole, are you?"

"There's no bein' above or below it, silly," Triffie replied, still loftily scornful. "We can't help passing the Wool-pack unless we go miles out of our way."

The smock race took place within the precincts of the fair, but the leg of mutton on a greased pole was a private entertainment. Every year this prize drew crowds to the highly respectable and time-honoured Wool-pack just outside the town and on the girls' way home. Adah could not, however, give up the smock race without a final effort.

"I say, Triffie."

"Say on, Adah."

"Uncle Jethro would make a fine piece of work about it, I know, but I should like just a peep at the mawthers a-runnin' like mad, I'll treat you to sixpennorth of almond rock if you'll keep me company."

"I tell you I'm a little respectable if you're not, so don't waste any more breath about it and go by yourself."

Adah gave way, shedding tears of mortification as she trudged on a couple of yards behind the other. The bosom friends seldom spent a holiday together with-

* E. A., hobbledehoys.

out a tiff, each upon such occasions declaring the other "terrifyin' to live with."

No sooner did they come in sight of the Woolpack, the greased pole and the crowds than sullenness and mutual despite vanished. Adah even put one hand lovingly within her companion's arm and whispered that she loved her dearly. The spectacle might well have charmed less susceptible beholders.

High above the closely packed heads showed the greased pole and prize, whilst immediately around were the competitors, stalwart young ploughmen, their hair the colour of ripe barley, their cheeks poppy-red, partly from excitement, partly from an extra pot of ale, their eyes about the blueness of flet milk, their hardy limbs in whitey-brown cotton shirts and corduroy brogues. More than one son of the soil here as far as build and proportions went, like Absalom, was without a blemish from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. Shyly enough each held back till his turn came, emulation deepening the sunburnt complexions, lighting up the pale blue eyes. Not only was manly strength and skill here on trial, fathers, mothers, sweethearts awaiting to acclaim the victor, but the guerdon itself lent stoutness of heart and strengthened every muscle.

When Dardan Acestes summoned his best and bravest in honour of Æneas, alike captains, wrestlers and racers knew what waited upon victory. Far more covetable than could be robes dyed in Tyrian purple, steers with gilded horns, belts of richest gold, graven goblet and wreaths of bay to Sicilian emulators was the reward for which these young Suffolkers contended. For they were striving after the ineffable, the unknown. They

had just sniffed the squire's turkey, the farmer's sirlo on Christmas Day; none had ever tasted roast mutto So amid an indescribable but persistently sympatheti uproar, a frantic chorus of good-natured fleers, loud gu faws and rough banter, one athlete after another steppe forth to try his strength, one after another tumbling hea over heels, object of mingled raillery and commiseration A-dust, sweated, ready to cry of vexation, half a scor of picked youths, flower of village prowess and chivalry slunk sheepishly away when hip-hip-hoorays and peal of laughter announced another rival.

"Lor!" cried Adah, pinching Triffie's arm as sh spoke, "true as I stand here, it's that lantern-jawe spindle-shanks Jerry Codd. He'll be sprawling on a fours in a jiffy, I lay."

The latest aspirant after glory and a prime leg c mutton evidently belonged to the artisan class. N ploughman was this spare, sallow young man who i business-like fashion now threw off his coat, turned bac his shirt-sleeves, and with a proud look of defiance a grinning gesticulating beholders entered the lists. Maste Jeremiah Codd was a journeyman shoemaker, Mister h would be later on; that is to say when setting up on hi own account.

Excitement was soon at its height, for it becam evident that Jerry meant to win. Without fluster, co tortions, deep-drawn breaths and impatient muttering he maintained his hold, spectators and baffled compet tors cheering vociferously. So elastic his limbs, so ca like his agility that before folks knew where they wer the prize was his, the pole was headless.

And before folks could sufficiently recover from thei

surprise to acclaim the winner he had all but disappeared, was skurrying off in the direction of Burridge, the gigot under one arm, under the other a captive yet by no means unreluctant hand.

Laughing, screaming, putting on make-believe shyness and affront, Adah allowed herself to be carried off, elected participator of the feast to come.

It was the knight's homage to the fair, the victor's tribute to his queen of the tournament!

CHAPTER VII.

A DISTURBING APPARITION.

SAM WEEDON'S farm-house like many another hereabouts looked on a fair but narrow prospect. Reached only by field paths and wooded lanes the white-washed, one-gabled dwelling stood amid gently sloping meadows, beyond these peeping a grey church tower, rectory chimneys and a thatched roof or two. Such a landscape, verdant, peaceful, remote, nicely suggested the triple composition of county society, focussed those neighbouring but sharply defined divisions: aristocracy—for aristocrat of aristocrat was your rural parson of fifty years ago—middle rank, and people.

Hardly wider apart on the eve of glorious '89 had been the three French estates. Ever worthy of his hire seemed ploughman or reaper in the farmer's eyes, with lofty courteousness rural dean and vicar accepted tithes and the co-operation of orthodox churchwardens. Between cottage and farm-house, farm-house and parsonage stretched gulfs impassable as those separating church and meeting-house.

Sam Weedon's home and its surroundings suggested other realities, the unbroken quietude, the ambling, unambitious routine, the circumscribed horizons of thought and vision characterising its tenant and his class.

Metaphorically speaking folks lived long in those

old-fashioned slumbrous days, no feverish activities, no spasmodic emotions breaking up the even, long-drawn-out tenor of daily life. One year like one natural scene was fellow to its neighbour.

But such lots had sweetness! How pleasant that small box-bordered flower-garden, every flower therein a kind of inanimate relation, part of our childhood, part of ourselves! For here were no floral paragons or carefully nurtured exotics, instead from January to December familiar blossoms, the constellations not re-appearing more regularly. Beyond lay enclosed potato and vegetable garden, both securely padlocked at night, and adjoining these, orchard, farm buildings and stackyard all set round with dimpled pastures.

It was a lonesome spot, a mile from the turnpike road, and by way of intimidating gipsy, pig-poisoners, and other marauders the following notice was affixed to an outside wall: "Spring guns and man-traps set on these premises." As a matter of fact such engines had long fallen into disuse, but the same warning might still be seen here and there. The bachelor's household roosted early, the chamber lantern and rushlight being dispensed with from haysel to barley harvest, that is to say, from early summer till September. "Store is no sore," "Fast bind, fast find," were among Sam's favourite saws. Coals and mould candles were dear, and even rushlights cost money. The worthy farmer was indeed like Martha, careful overmuch.

On the night of May Fair he was sitting up a little later than usual. Mrs. Amos, the sturdy, ungainly body who milked his cows and made his shirts, must of course

accompany her son to the fair. Jimmy, a stout hud-deren was boarded in the house as ploughman.

"Don't be surprised if he comes home cutting fine capers, Mr. Weedon," had said his proud mother at starting; "he's set his mind on gettin' that there leg of mutton."

Sam had just made up his mind that he would go to bed when he heard stealthy footsteps outside the garden.

"Some tinker chap, I lay, a-sniffin' round the pig-styes; I'll start him pretty quick," he said, and shoulder-ing an old gun valiantly challenged the intruder. "You'd best have a care," he shouted, "or I'll learn you to prowl about here in the dead of the night."

A girl's laugh answered him.

"There, there, Mr. Weedon, put up that gun do," cried Adah. "Don't go and end your days on the gal-lows like James Rush who was hanged last April. Dead of the night indeed! Why the bats aren't flying abroad yet."

The sprightly apparition and sportive reprimand quite overwhelmed Sam. Twilight could hardly do justice to such a visitor, but in the fading light the tall commanding figure stood out boldly, and if her throat, white as the driven snow, eyes black as coals, and cheeks that free of freckles you'd declare she lived under a cucumber frame, were somewhat dimmed he knew that they were there.

"How should I dream of seein' you here and at this hour? but come inside, my dear, you're as welcome as the flowers in May. Nothin' gone wrong at home, I hope?"

"Not that I know on, Mr. Weedon; but if uncle Jethro had tumbled head first into the well or Martha

had been set at by a mad bull, they'd have sent for me to the Barley Mow."

"Then I s'pose you're come after a pig, I think I can oblige you," the farmer said, showing her into his little keeping-room.

No, I haven't come after a pig," Adah replied with the utmost assurance; "we've left off keeping pigs. I thought you knew that," she added pertly.

"Well, leastways, I'll make bold to offer you a glass of sherry wine. Take a seat on the sofy."

Adah opened her large eyes. Sherry wine indeed! Then Sam Weedon was not the miserly fellow folks set him down for, or, she caressed the flattering thought, a girl like herself would wind him round her little finger.

"I mus'n't tarry," she replied; "but as you're so pressin' I won't say no, and here's towards you," with that she sipped the draught, its inspiriting qualities not being needed in her case. Entire mistress of herself she sat bolt upright enjoying the other's admiration. For Sam had lighted and snuffed the mould candles on the mantelpiece, then seating himself he beheld his guest to the best possible advantage. "Yes," he mused, "you might ride a white horse black before setting eyes on such another and with a tongue to match sure-ly!"

"Your very good health, my dear," he said, nodding before he touched the glass; after the wine imbibing a much stronger intoxication, the sight of her dark, insinuating eyes.

"Might you be a-wantin' some faggots for your bake-oven?" he asked. "If so, you're welcome to the driest I've got, and dry is damp this showery weather."

"No, Mr. Weedon," blurted out the beauty, "I've

come on very pendin' business of my own. The long and the short of it is, you've just got to be obligin' for once, and lend me ten pound."

Sam looked positively thunderstruck. Unluckily for himself, but auspiciously for the borrower, he had that sum and more in his bureau. But he was not a moneyed man and when haysel or harvest had turned out badly, his horses had died of the gripes or his sheep of the drop, he was wont to compare himself to a toad under a harrow.

"What might a young female like you want with such a heap of money?" he got out, his words almost sounding like an appeal.

"That's my business, Mr. Weedon," came Adah's sharp retort, "and nobody else's. You've got the money, you'll lend it to me and you'll get it back afore you can turn yourself round. So there!"

Quite incapable of further resistance the farmer rose, blew out one candle and took up the other.

"Just give me a light in the kitchen whilst I tell the money," he said, his face showing conflicting emotions, the pang of material concern, the transport of half-confessed feeling.

Without a word she followed him to his bureau, that antiquated piece of furniture, half chest of drawers, half escritoire, never absent from farm-house kitchens. Very deliberately, the tremor of Sam's fingers arising partly from dismay, partly from exuberance, he drew one by one ten sovereigns out of a shabby knitted purse having bone rings. Then locking the bureau he handed her the money

"I wouldn't have done as much for any other woman livin'," he said, in a tell-tale undertone.

"As if I didn't know that! Howsome-ever I thank you kindly, Mr. Weedon; good-night to you."

Away she tripped, delighted to have attained her object, leaving him the tenant of a new tormenting but delicious world!

The neighbours might set Sam down as a persistent old bachelor, for all that he would occasionally dream of a notable wife and strapping youngsters. But he had always made up his mind that a domestic partner must bring him something besides eyes black as sloes and a throat white as the driven snow. She must have a tidy bit of money and withal be a good housewife, able to turn her hand to anything and get up a-mornins.

To-night he could think of nothing but Adah and Adah's behaviour, not only just now but throughout the day. The more he thought of it the more it looked like a piece of feminine advance. Bless the little hussy, she always treated men-folk as so much dirt, and that morning had quitted the booth in order to serve him! He didn't believe that she wanted the money, not she. The loan was a test, a feeler. She wanted him to understand that she could be had for the asking, that though he was old enough to be her father she would like a place behind his tea-pot and a seat in his gig o' market days. That toss of the head and pat answer as she pocketed the money! Why it was all as plain as your hand!

Next morning he awoke to musings equally visionary. The newly awakened castle-building self dogged his footsteps throughout the daily routine. Alike when calling his fowls to their scattered corn, when doing out milk and barley meal to his pigs, Adah's image was in his mind.

"Drat the master, mother," observed Jimmy, pair sat down to their savoury pork-pudding and ca "He seems every bit as lost as a pig in a pound.

"There, Jimmy, leave other folks' business was Mrs. Amos's sapient reply. There are n things in country places as secrets and—the ver must have whispered it—Adah's visit had reach ears. "Pryin' into matters which don't concern never fill our bellies."

"I didn't say that it would, mother, but I like to know why master keeps a-rummagin' at the keepin'-room."

"Let him rummage, it don't hurt we."

That sudden habit of rummaging was accounted for by the astute housekeeper. When a thoughts are running upon matrimony he casts ab presents to his intended bride. Twenty years an ago her master's mother had been laid to rest village churchyard and from that day to this, to t of her knowledge, the late Mrs. Sam Weedon's l ings, work-box, writing-desk, chest of drawers a rest, had never been touched. What more like that her son would unlock these now, looking for and chain, brooch and other trinkets? Well, if married she should lose a good place, and if he r a rip like Adah Rose he would live to repent meddle and make with other folk's business?—no knew it.

CHAPTER VIII.

SAM'S CURE FOR LOW SPIRITS.

WHAT with one job and another Sam Weedon's day was always choke-full, and however much he might ruminate he had no time for rummaging till after tea.

But the tea-things cleared, as Jimmy expressed it, he was "at it again," rummaging away as if searching for lost treasure.

Now Sam's mother had been a beauty in her day and had moreover inherited more than one trinket of considerable value. He recollected as a boy having feasted his eyes on a certain coral necklace with gold snaps and sundry brooches and rings, long since consigned to some place of security, the whereabouts as yet a mystery.

One evening he bethought him of the large rose-wood work-box inlaid with mother-of-pearl as a likely receptacle. Left precisely as when closed by its owner for the last time, he found everything in its place, silver thimble, netting shuttle and embroidered stirrup, well-filled huswife, scissors now requiring the grinder, with cottons and crewels neatly assorted. And how did Sam's face shine when at last he discovered, carefully wrapt up in tissue paper, the coral necklace that had dazzled his boyish eyes!

Those scarlet beads encircling Adah's white rounded throat! The farmer grew years younger as holding up the treasure he imagined the bewitching contrast, ripe hips and haws against a snowy background could not be more beautifully opposed. Next he found a pretty set of garnet brooch and ear-rings and how well too these would become her! Folks might perhaps quiz him for marrying a chit of a girl, but Adah could turn her hand to anything, he felt sure of that, and after all it is only natural for a man to take a young wife and rear a family. What else were men sent into the world for? A wife too would displace a housekeeper, the change would be an economy. That very morning at breakfast had come an additional argument in favour of courtship and matrimony.

"Lord a-mussy, Mr. Weedon!" had exclaimed Mrs. Amos; "had you been taken bad in the night sure as I stand here I should have been shipped off to Botany Bay, like Margaret Catchpole."

It was habitual with country folks to talk of life, the young and old, the sickly with the most robust as hanging on a thread.

"Look you here," she went on, unknotting the corner of a red cotton handkerchief and displaying several gold pieces besides silver and halfpence. "Mrs. Frost was here yesterday and brought this lot of money, three pound, seven shillins and three pence for eggs and butter. You told me she might have some sittin' hens and I made eleven pints of butter, sweet as a nut and come without any piece of work."

The welcome display of money added zest to Sam's

dreaming. If a hired servant could do so well with cows and poultry what might not be expected of a wife?

Musing on these things again and again he fingered his treasures before making them up into a parcel. The house was very quiet. Mrs. Amos had betaken herself to the village. The day labourers had gone home, and Jimmy snored in a hay-loft. On a sudden a shadow flitted before the window, and there stood Adah looking saucier, a finer figure of a woman than ever.

"If so be that I'm intrudin', Mr. Weedon, I hope you'll overlook it, but I've come to bring back your ten pound." Unknotting her handkerchief she let the gold pieces roll onto the table, steadying them with her hand. "And I thank you kindly for the same——"

"You needn't do that, nor have been so hasty about bringing the money back neither," poor Sam said, intoxicated with the captivating vision before him. "And I can't let a young woman like you go away without a glass of wine," he added, moving towards the chiffonier; he felt that the toasting of his visitor would impart courage.

Nothing loth, Adah plumped herself down into a chair. A second time the pair drank to each other, then rising abruptly she declared herself in a tearing hurry.

"There, there, your business isn't so pendin' as all that neither," Sam began; "as I was a-sayin' just now, you needn't have run fit to break your neck about bringing back that ten pound. To speak my mind to you, my dear, I'd as lief you keep 'em as not." Adah's large eyes looked still larger with surprise. "I'm not one to take liberties," pursued Sam, with terrible difficulty getting out his meaning, "but as you came to me for the money,

I took it as friendly like, and if so be that you'll overlook my years, you've only to tie up those sovereigns in your handkercher again, and we'll be asked in church, true as my name is Sam Weedon, and that afore harvest if you be so minded."

As much feeling as it was possible to him Sam had put into the speech, and looking almost sheepish in his suspense he awaited her reply.

But instead of a blush and simpering "Yes" came a cruelly jarring laugh. With a toss of the head Adah jumped from her seat.

"Lor, Mr. Weedon, do you think I'm so mad after you chaps as to take a man old enough to be my father?" She added in her sauciest tone: "I'm a limb* for a joke, as you know, and I bet Ben Catchpole on Fair Day that I'd get you to lend me all that money, though you've a character for being near, and so I did. I've won my wager and you're none the worse. Good evening to you."

A minute or two later he heard voices in the field path leading to his house. Triffie had evidently accompanied her friend, and the pair walked away, of course making merry at his expense.

For he saw it all now. With Adah's feelings for himself the loan had nothing whatever to do. He had been the victim of a jest, once more the butt of village wags. Want him indeed? Why the baggage had almost thrown the money at his head and was out-dacious enough to laugh in his face!

Swiftly and silently Sam put back the trinkets, locked the work-box and replaced it on the card-table. Then

* E. A., a crack hand.

hile he waited by the window, staring at nothing.
ıe possessed a confidant he would have declared
f ready to jump into the horse-pond. But he was
ly man and that handling of the coral necklace
ɔt a topic on which he could speak to Mrs. Amos.
ddenly the rueful countenance brightened. A
·ting thought crossed his mind. It was about time
l his pigs.

ɔre briskly than usual he mixed the flet milk and
meal, that delicious compound rendering even pigs
r in their ecstatic enjoyment and gratitude. And
uncouth noisy creatures hustled each other by the
ıs, now grunting with anticipation, now snorting
ɜatiety, Sam smiled to see. The accustomed task
ɜs reward for the moment soothed and molified.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BABYLONISH GARMENT, THE WEDGE OF GOLD.

UNCLE JETHRO was taking tea with a neighbour that afternoon, and the sisters re-entered the cottage together, both looking crestfallen enough. "I wish I were dead," Adah burst forth, flinging herself into a chair and crying bitterly. "If yonder brook would only overflow as it did last Martinmas I'd plump in head first, and a good riddance to bad rubbish uncle Jethro would say for one."

"Put away your handkercher, do, and tell me what this piece of work is about," Martha said, for the moment forgetting her own discomfiture.

"Uncle Jethro found out, then, about that ten pound I borrowed of Mr. Weedon——"

"Ten pound! you borrowed ten pound, Adah?"

"Oh! of course you look as struck of a heap as if I had picked the old fellow's pocket, you're such a pattern, never nannickin with the chaps and looking that meek I'm sure butter wouldn't melt in your mouth."

"As if I were any better than yourself," Martha interrupted, ready herself to cry. She added: "But what could you want with all that money?"

Thus appealed to, and with many an outburst, Adah narrated her escapade, uncle Jethro's discovery of the

hidden loan awing her careless nature, making her tremble before what seemed second sight.

For despite, or rather by reason of, his infirmity blind Rose ever became cognisant of most things that happened around him. Hearing, and other faculties did duty for sight. As well expect a cat not to sniff a mouse as uncle Jethro not to scent a secret, Adah would declare.

"Now," she said, as she concluded her narrative, "if uncle Jethro weren't next door to the witch of Endor how could he have guessed that the money I was telling in my chamber belonged to somebody else? I shall hire myself in the Shires, I shall, I don't like folks looking into my inside."

"You should have nothing in your inside, as you call your conscience I suppose, to be ashamed of," Martha said demurely, and then checked a blush. What about herself, her own inside or conscience?

That afternoon as blind Rose drowsed in his elbow chair he had heard unwonted chinking overhead, the unmistakable sound of money stealthily counted.

"For if I must tell the truth, Martha," Adah continued, "as I told the ten bright pounds afore carryin' 'em back to Sam Weedon I said to myself that I might just as well keep back one, the packman is sure to be round at Whitsun, and I'd set my heart on buying a gown piece, white muslin with neat blue or pink sprigs, I could pay back the money with what I get for my gleaning corn, and as to Mr. Weedon, he'd give me the eyes out of his head. 'Yes, I'll have the gown," says I, and up I jumped to fetch a clean handkercher in which to tie up the nine sovereigns, when down the lot rattled onto the floor, and 'Adah,' cried uncle Jethro from below,

'Adah, come down this moment.' Down I went, in course, and 'Adah,' says uncle, "you've been creeping about like a mouse overhead, telling and letting fall money that don't belong to you.' 'Not belong to me, uncle?' says I, all of a shake and tremble, you could have knocked me down with a leaf. 'No,' says he, 'if I can't see copper, silver and gold, the Lord be praised I can give them their proper names with the help of my fingers and ears, just sit down and let me know how you came by those sovereigns.' 'Martha and I always keep what money we have in our chamber, uncle.' 'A lying tongue is one of the seven things the Lord hateth, Adah,' said uncle, striking the kitchen floor with his crome stick, "you sit in that there chair till I know the truth." So I told him, Adah added, and he didn't say much, Martha, but he looked the more."

Again Adah relieved herself with a loud, childish tearshed.

"I'll hie off to the Shires, Martha, there'll be no livin' with uncle for me after this, he was put out enough about Jerry Codd's leg of mutton,—that I went home and had supper with his folks after the fair, I mean. If I'm not to nannick with the bors now and then I'd as lief be under the sod and have done with it."

Just then the low tap of uncle Jethro's stick was heard outside. To many a neighbour's house he would find his way alone.

"What was that you were a-sayin' just now, Adah?" he asked.

Until within a few hours before Adah would doubtless have escaped with a mere, "Nothin' worth repeatin', uncle." This evening the most commanding glance could

not have swayed her more completely than the blind man's short stern question. Word for word she repeated herself. And a second time he said little, silence again awing more than the bitterest upbraiding could have done. The two girls sat as if spell-bound, Martha feeling certain that sooner or later her own turn would come, upon herself would be poured the vials of her uncle's wrath.

After an ominous pause the silence was broken.

"'When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.' Adah, I suppose you take the application of that verse?"

"What has it to do with me, uncle?" Adah exclaimed, now too angry for tears. "I didn't steal Mr. Weedon's money——"

"I speak in parables and you know it well enough. But you had no more right to the use of the ten pound than the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah of the tribe of Judah, to the accursed thing. Fetch yon Word of God and read between you, each taking a verse, the seventh chapter of the book of Joshua; if it don't prove a cuttin' one to both of you I'm much out of my reckonin'! For I've had my eye," the blind man would often use some such expression, "on you too of late, Martha; you've been mightily taken to gaddin' since stone-pickin'. And the Evil One lies in wait; the less young females roam the better. But read, takin' a verse at a time, and mind your stops." Falteringly the sisters read that awful story of unpremeditated crime and merciless expiation. "The accursed

thing, the spoils of Jericho!" repeated the old man, th preacher's spirit being now awakened, "We must loo to the meanin' more than the words here; what the stand for in our own day and to each of us. Th goodly Babylonish garment, the gold and the silver mea sin, carnal backsliding, converse with the sons of Belial sayin' one thing and meanin' another. I'm that put t shame for you, Adah, I'd rather you found a place, took service under a sharp missus; aye, what you want is one with eyes in the back of her head."

"And so I've a mind to," Adah retorted with something of her old spirit, "and I'm sure a missus with eyes in the back of her head wouldn't terrify me as you do who can't see with two."

"The Lord grant that I terrify you to your soul's good, Adah, and as I was a-sayin' I'm uneasy about you, Martha; you've been given to losin' yourself these last few days and sometimes are peevish with your sister. Who'd have thought that I should come to be naught in this here house? But the bald head is mocked as of old and if she-bears no longer tear the jeerers to pieces, be sure that the evil figs, the very naughty figs, as the prophet says, will become a reproach and a curse."

"We're not ill meaning, uncle," began Martha meekly. Adah had dashed away in a temper.

"Many words will not fill a bushel, Martha, it's a man's or woman's farins* that count with the Almighty."

"Won't you have your chapter afore going to bed?" she ventured to ask.

"Not to-night, your mind wouldn't be in it, I'd a

* Behaviour, doings.

soon hear a daw croak as listen to anyone readin' Scripture whose thoughts are miles away."

"Indeed, uncle——"

"And I've to preach the Gospel to-morrow, so take to your sewin' and leave me to my ponderins. Peradventure I may touch more than one carnal-minded."

Rarely, indeed, had the blind man declined the nightly prelection, and in her present frame Martha took the rebuke as a portent. She too was being read through and through by the sightless monitor, her secret, like Adah's, was perhaps already in his possession or at least divined.

Since that disconcerting adventure with the turkey-cock she had not seen Clem, and had only found one tiny note in their post-office, the pollard-oak, his tiny missive containing many a misspelt endearment but no proposal of a tryst. Danvers had come home, wrote the timorous lover, and the deuce a bit of liberty could he get. Bury Fair was however at hand. Dan would be away for the day, he would then meet her in the plantation.

On these sweet evenings of early summer blind Rose would sit in the front doorway overlooking the road, breathing the lilac-scented air, hearkening to the pipings of mavis and blackbird, the far-off cooings of the wood-pigeon, and interchanging a word or two with passing neighbours, each recognised by his footfall. For his ponderings he chose the hinder door, here also obtaining fragrance and bird-singing and being freed from interruptions. The back-house opened upon an enclosure of potherbs and fruit bushes, the homeliest and the sweetest—flowers in their season brightening the

borders. Thus secluded he gave himself up to personal and therefore uplifting reverie. He now f alike grave misgivings and petty vexations. Steep Biblical lore and poetry, for the nonce his being irradiated from within. Like Milton he soared in to that heavenly region he hoped one day to r rejoicing almost ecstatically that whilst on earth he its humble herald.

CHAPTER X.

DAN BLUSHES.

ALTHOUGH what a great poetess has called the resonant steam eagle, in other words the train, now flashed by Suffolk drifts and pightles, folks preferred old-fashioned methods of way-faring. No one used the new-fangled railway when gigs, coaches or steam-boats were available, especially was the water-way preferred by those reaching or quitting London. Nothing in very truth could be more delightful than such a sea-trip, and whether bound to or from the capital, a traveller's first experience was enchanting. London like Venice is only thus adequately realised. Upon the naïve beholder, speaking broad Suffolk, his garments smelling of country hedges, eyes and mouth agape, the city loomed with awesomeness. He trembled at the notion of being engulfed in that immensity; land and sea seemed here to come to an end, the rest of the world being sheer Babylon upon Babylon of bricks and mortar. To the cosmopolitan, the vast silhouette darkening the heavens, whether flaming in the sunset or subdued to the shadowy tints of a mirage, the spectacle was striking. The least impressionable yielded to passing rapture.

A citizen born within sound of Bow Bells bound to Ipswich would behold a series of transformation scenes,

If able to keep his sea-legs between Tilbury and Languard Fort he would enjoy a grey sea and bold breakers, then the fairy-like region unpoetically known as Hog Island, on either side of the Orwell, rising dimpled hills and wooded dells.

Danvers had already journeyed from London by steamer and had just now a soul above experiences so commonplace and trivial. With the lofty air of one who had circumnavigated the globe, he paced the deck in great-coat und muffler, delighted to find that folks eyed him and held aloof.

"They take me for a Frenchman I do believe," he chuckled to himself, and recognising no one on board he even ventured upon mystifying the steward, asking for *bifteck, frummage,* and the *additiong* instead of bill.

It was late in the afternoon when the boat arrived and glancing up Dan saw with satisfaction that Clem had not come to meet him.

"He might be taken by surprise and make a fool of himself before other people," he said, wrapping his muffler closer round his chin.

"I'm good tightly glad to see you safe landed on Canaan's shore," began Clem's substitute, Master Wix a brown wizened-faced little old man with eyes of froggish brightness, employed for odd jobs on the farm and in the house and now tidied-up for the occasion, "which is more than I expected leastways, a-goin' all that way off, but true as I stand here, Mr. Dan, you're that transmogrified I hardly know you——"

"Is everything all right?" Dan interrupted with evident annoyance, as having deposited his knapsack in the gig-box he seated himself and took hold of the reins

"Well, Mr. Dan, I can't say as how everything is right or t'otherwise, but, Lord a mussy me! you've been ill in foreign parts sure-ly?" and again Master Wix eyed his master with curiosity that almost savoured of alarm.

"What is Mr. Clem about that he did not come down to the quay?" Dan asked sharply.

"Well, to tell you the truth, Mr. Dan, I was that struck of a heap at seeing you so changed—poor missus herself wouldn't have known you had she lived to this day, I'm sure—I forgot to say Whitefoot has got the gripes." Whitefoot was a valuable cart-horse and many of his kind fall victims to the colic after feeding on fresh clover. Dan's thoughts immediately changed.

"Badly?" he asked in an anxious tone.

"He isn't so bad but he might be a sight deal worse, but Mr. Clem was up with him all night and won't leave him now, that's why I'm here, he's had his gribbals*—Whitefoot I mean, and lor! Mr. Dan, he's taken them that beautiful a Christian sufferer couldn't beat him; but, as I'm always a-sayin', animals have often more godliness in 'em than many of us who go to the table. But is it a sore-throat or a touch of the influenzy you got beyond seas, Mr. Dan?"

"There's nothing the matter with me," Dan retorted crossly. "Just answer my questions, will you?"

"There, there," Master Wix made coaxing answer. He had known his employer as an unbreeched bantling and stood in no awe of his snappishness, unwonted although it was. Dan had ever present the motto—

* Gripe-balls.

Nobility obliges; he looked upon ill-tempered outbursts as ungentlemanly and unbecoming, resentment was shown by knitted brows and cutting speech.

"There, there, Mr. Dan, don't be that tetchy and take offence where it wasn't meant, but seeing you so muffled up——"

"Did Mr. Clem show any corn yesterday?" he broke in, now speaking without heat.

"Lord a mussy me, Mr. Dan, you haven't been all this while in foreign parts for nothin'! Why markets are flat as flounders, your best Talavera might almost as well be hulled* into the sea as exposed on Ipswich Cornhill such times as these; but as I was a-goin' to say, and I hope I'm not a-takin' too much on myself, there's nothin' for a sore throat like well scourin' it with sugar and vinegar and tyin' your stockin', warm from your foot, round it afore you go to sleep——"

"Has Daisy calved?" asked Dan, and before that question was fairly answered putting another, thus contriving to stave off further questions of a valetudinarian nature.

Using an elder brother's privilege Dan never waited for Clem at meal-times. Having somewhat tartly answered Saranne's breathless question after his health and sent her away he began his tea. When Clem entered the keeping-room the traveller's back was turned to him, at that moment Dan being occupied in slicing the ham redolent of old home-brewed.

"So you've got back, old chap," Clem said, holding out his hand; then no sooner was the other's face

* E. A., thrown.

turned to him than his own became convulsed with astonishment and diversion.

"Good Heavens! Dan——" but not for the life of him could he get out a word more. Stuffing his handkerchief into his mouth he rocked himself to and fro.

For the first time he could remember Dan felt that he was reddening. To blush at anything Clem might say was a humiliation past bearing. Straight he made for the glass, tapping it vigorously.

"Lucky for us the hay is got in and thatched, we shall have rain before morning," he said, then, reassured as to his complexion, he again took up his carving knife. Dan was a bit of an epicure and all but transparent, mere films, were the slices with which he now filled his plate.

Once more seated before the tea-pot he glanced at Clem, now a ludicrous, almost pitiable figure in his battle with risibility. Do what he would poor Clem could not control himself, the very demon of laughter had taken possession of him. He gasped, he spluttered, he wiped his streaming eyes, coughed, sneezed, objurgated, in vain.

"I wouldn't make such an ass of myself, if I were you," Dan exclaimed savagely.

"Well, you took me so by surprise, I really couldn't help it."

And again the fit came on, another glance at the other's perspective moustache was too much, vainly Clem tried a sip of harvest beer, then a turn in the room, the preposterous innovation brought on another fit, he laughed till he cried.

"Don't be such a confounded ass," Dan said; "did

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you never hear of a man letting his hair grow on hi chin before? I intend to drop my razors for good an so I tell you."

Clem suddenly calmed down. The staggering piec of information acted as a sedative.

"You don't mean to say that you'll show yourse on the Cornhill aping your betters like that?"

"What idiotic stuff are you talking now? aping m betters, indeed, I should like to know who are an Englishman's betters?"

"Oh," retorted Clem quickly, far too concerned t measure the effect of his words, "I wasn't thinking folks over the water, but of Sir Brian; you see landlord don't like us farmers to make too much of ourselve and it's only the gentry who wear moustaches."

"Then I'll belong to the gentry," was the lofty repl "Pork and what farmers have had their day, it is no the turn of the gentlemen-farmers, and if I'm not on who is, who is I should like to know? *Passez-moi beurre, s'il vous plait*—oh, I forget, you don't unde stand French, and three weeks in Paris have quite pu my mother-tongue out of my head. Hand on the butte please. And, of course," he added, "my ways of goin on need be nothing to you, nor yours to me."

"Of course not," Clem replied, "it isn't as if w were going to run in harness together all our lives."

"You'd like to be on your own hook, would you? asked Dan, still lofty and aggressive. "Nothing easie Thank God I can borrow as much money as I like, an you'd rather, I daresay, take a three-horse farm an marry a dairymaid."

This turn of the conversation rather pleased Cle

ɔt. He liked that allusion to a divided future
ɜolved partnership.
ɜll, if ever we do part company, Dan, it's getting
ıd the first moment I hear of a nice little occu-
I shall saddle Peter and ride off to get the

was too much occupied with his own thoughts,
ıch phrase-book, and his apple-turnover to notice
ɜagerness.
his plate lay the manual of French conversation
l accompanied him on his travels and into which
ɔed from time to time.
ıope you enjoyed yourself in Paris?" asked Clem
pause.
ɯ know well enough I didn't go to all that ex-
ɔr the sake of enjoying myself. I went to see
ld, get a little polish and pick up ideas."
suppose you didn't pick up anything in the
line, Dan?" Clem asked, his thoughts running
ɔe little occupation and Martha.
ally, to hear you talk one would think you had
ɔught up in the backwoods! Do you suppose
ɜy spud thistles on the boulevards and dibble
the Champs Elysées?"
n now began to talk of poor Whitefoot and his
ɔf the new calf and of the splendid litter, of the
in and thatched, Dan listening with the forced
ı of a traveller not easily recalled to routine.
ɜn Clem's narrative ended Dan pointed to an
ttter lying on the chiffonier.

* A tenant farm.

"The Atwells have invited me to an evening party next Thursday, and they say that they will be very pleased to see you too," he said, the last sentence spoken condescendingly as if to a poor relation or dependant. "You will go, I suppose?"

"Not I," was the hasty reply. Clem here quite able to hold his own. "High life is not in my line."

"Do as you like," Dan said, perhaps rather glad that Clem's homely ways would not put him to the blush; "though," he added, "I should jump at the opportunity of polishing myself up a bit if I were you."

"Oh, one high-flier in the family is enough. You be the gentleman-farmer, I'm content to be the pork and what ditto. Well, I'm glad you're home safe and sound, old chap, and now I'll have a look at Whitefoot and lock up."

Off Clem went whistling joyfully, Martha's tender eyes, Martha's shy smile in his mind, every other thought distanced.

"Yes," he said to himself, "I can see what Dan is driving at, he wants me to clear out, which is just what I want myself; he'll marry one of those boarding-school misses from Ipswich, that's what he'll do, and the sooner I can hear of a nice little occupation the better he'll be pleased; and as to Martha what will he care so long as he's rid of me."

Dan for his part when left alone grew pensive. The reception of his budding moustache disconcerted, set him thinking, deliberating. Should he or should he not pursue the perilous path of hirsute innovation? If Clem had not been able to control himself at the sight what would be the effect upon his neighbours and acquaint-

ances next market day? And at the Crown and Anchor dinner too! Pleasant that! A burst of guffaws as he entered the room, giggles, chuckles, jokes while the roast beef and batter pudding went round. Confound it, no, if a moustache like mustard and cress could be grown in a day, all very well, but this intermediate stage was exasperating, he must give up the game and return to his razors. Again and again he took out a pocket mirror and eyed the beautifying downiness ruefully. Then with a sigh of resignation, long and deep, he sat down to pen his acceptance.

CHAPTER XI.

HIGH LIFE.

"My friend Atwell, the solicitor," as Danvers c Selina's papa, was a conveyancing clerk in receipt hundred and twenty-five pounds per annum. From in the morning till six at night Mr. Horatio Atwell c fully drew up wills and deeds, his existence like th many other mortals being a daily series of transfc tions. Office hours over, his shabby surtout excha for a swallow-tailed coat, in those days the appı habiliment of an elderly gentleman, he now moved the genteelest possible surroundings.

There was no mystery about the suburban villa its flower and vegetable garden, substantially furn drawing- and dining-room—keeping-room and best pa were terms no longer in vogue among aspiring towr —two neat maids and other evidences of well-bein most amounting to wealth.

Mr. Atwell had a widowed sister named, or r misnamed, Cribb, and from attic to cellar, from ga gate to outer wall, the place breathed of Mrs. C was saturated with her benefactions. For the missi this most inappositely styled woman, was to bestow large and in a material sense to beautify. Whene new carpet appeared on the stairs, when flower

and borders were planted with annuals, when Mrs. Atwell appeared in a new gown or Miss Selina in a new visite, friends and neighbours knew well enough whence they came. By the little circle to which they belonged Mrs. Cribb was regarded as a Providential dispensation; the term of fairy godmother being inappropriate to so awe-inspiring a personage.

Tall, spare and a trifle severe of aspect was Mrs. Cribb. So sharp the lines of her rather handsome features, so little else was there but lines, that she made one think of a walking photograph. Straight black hair unsoftened by silver threads, olive complexion, slightly aquiline nose and thin lips rarely curved by a smile heightened this impression. Emotion grave or gay never disturbed her outward serenity and from widow's cap and craped bombazine she never diverged.

Alike in drawing-, dining-room and arbour Mrs. Cribb had ever her special place, a high seat which she occupied as a throne, the personification of Three per cents., material supremacy and consanguineous rectitude. For the late Mr. Cribb, builder and in a quiet conscientious way money-lender, had left his wife extremely well off, and although brother and sister seemed to have little in common, it was an understood thing that Selina was her sole heir. So ever-green looked Mrs. Cribb that such heirship appeared fabulously aloof, the Gaulish creditor's promise of payment in another world hardly more so. No particular affection, as far as outsiders could judge, existed between aunt and niece. But in one sense Mrs. Cribb was excessively devoted. The axiom that blood is thicker than water she adhered to as to an eighth

commandment, indeed it actuated every detail and ordering of daily life. Having, as she put the matter, lost a most indulgent husband, thereby forfeiting all that a world of tribulation could offer, remaining years were but a preparation for the tomb. On her dressing-table always lay one or other of four favourite, rather her only, poets. Blair's *Grave* after a regular interval would be exchanged for Hervey's *Meditations among the Tombs;* this volume in its turn giving place to Young's *Night Thoughts,* Pollok's *Course of Time* following. Blair's *Grave* occupied the pinnacle and after any unusually animated conversation or argumentative display with relish she would quote the beautiful apostrophe to the dead "tongue-warrior."

> Though strong persuasion hung upon thy lips,
> And sly insinuation's softer arts
> Alas, how chop-fallen now!

The last line indeed was a snare to Mrs. Cribb, as her homely, demure, but covertly sarcastic little sister-in-law said, she quoted it as some folks drank elderberry wine and ate gingerbread nuts in season and out of season.* Although, like King Richard, Mrs. Cribb delighted to talk of graves, of worms and epitaphs, whilst awaiting these, she most assiduously cultivated bodily comforts. Cheery, self-effacing, notable little Mrs. Atwell was kept on the alert from morning till night by her sister-in-law's exigencies. Mrs. Cribb's tea must be of invariable strength and temperature, Mrs. Cribb's mutton chops, like Portia's pound of flesh, must not exceed the

* Formerly a winter evening regale in Suffolk.

regulation weight by a scruple, and Mrs. Cribb's warming-pan must be heated to a certain ardour. Indeed the sorely tried little housewife all tender-heartedness and gentleness, would declare behind Aunt Georgiana's back that but for Selina she should have bundled out the fidgety piece of goods long ago, and sometimes felt equal to putting orange-peel on the staircase before she descended to breakfast! Mrs. Cribb was what a first-rate but little read author has called nepotious, with many another, steadfastness in theory not implying consistency in practice. Proud of her well-grown, good-looking and genteelly brought-up niece, the widow undoubtedly was, and she was her own flesh and blood, her only brother's only child. There alike interest and sentiment ended. Never throughout her existence had Selina been "dear'd" or "my lov'd" by her aunt, godmother and prospective enricher. Twice a year and twice only did Mrs. Cribb kiss her niece and sister-in-law, that is to say, on her departure to the Wells in September and on her return therefrom at the end of four weeks. With her one intimate friend and confidante, a certain Miss Wray, the widow annually patronised the famous Kentish Spa. No one but the gentry and commercial travellers journeyed so far from home in those days, and Mrs. Cribb ever apologised for the extravagance on the plea of health, although were prizes awarded for bodily soundness she would certainly have been a winner.

That double osculation during the year nicely indicated Mrs. Cribb's attitude towards her brother's family, an attitude, if a trifle frigid, correctness itself. Never day by day did domestic wheels roll with more oily

smoothness. How could it have been otherwise? For Mrs. Cribb was better off than Aladdin who had his slave of the lamp. Like Jupiter Olympus she had only to nod and her wishes or commands were carried out.

Her leal servitors might secretly compare themselves to toads under a harrow, and behind their benefactress's back indulge in mild expletives. Aunt Georgiana might opine how matters stood, but everything has its price in this world. If on the one hand a detached villa with large garden, two maids, a good table, and, above all, social consideration, implied perpetual subservience and truckling; on the other, power is sweet and the delights of reigning more than compensate for passive demur.

Mrs. Atwell, poor dear Carrie, Mrs. Cribb always called her, was a brisk, prettyish little woman to whom her sister-in-law's hot tea, mutton chops and warming-pans had brought stray white hairs and veritable faggots of tiny wrinkles. From this inadequately appreciated mother Selina inherited her beautiful wavy brown hair, but little else. The young lady's tallness and regularity of feature, also vagueness of expression, recalled paternal build and proportions.

If mere looks and appearance indeed were counted deserts, Mr. Horatio Atwell deserved something better than a high stool in a solicitor's office and just three pounds a week. But here mind and character did not match their envelope. Like his daughter Mr. Atwell recalled a poor picture in a handsome frame. The conveyancing clerk considered that on the whole his lot was cast in pleasant places. Not many men similarly employed occupied a detached villa, or sat down to roast sirloin and a glass of sherry on Sundays with ho

suppers throughout the week. Comfort is the Englishman's god, and Mr. Atwell was not here, perhaps, a more fervent devotee than the rest of us. And he totally lacked ambition.

In this little circle Mr. Danvers Fison was naturally regarded with unusual favour.

"A very chaste young man," Mrs. Cribb would say, after a visit from him.

Farming ever seemed an El Dorado to Suffolk townsfolk in those days. Mark Lane might be brisk or stagnant; barley crops might fail, and sheep might drop, the farmer in his smart gig was always envied and looked up to by his urban neighbours, especially those who sat at high desks. Housewives too in towns, how they envied queens of curds and whey, farming women with their apple chambers, crocks of butter, cream cheeses, hams pickled in old harvest beer, fat turkeys, and eggs to be had for the seeking. In their innocence the good souls deemed such foison gratuitous as the manna in the wilderness, not taking into account among other things the thousand hazards that may befall a grain of wheat between dibbling and harvest.

Danvers indeed was in the position of a boy having the prettiest apple possible at arm's length, a volition and it would drop into his hands. But on an adjoining bough and quite as easy of attainment hung another equally seductive, not a pin to choose between the two. The aspiring young farmer might perhaps better be likened to the four-footed waverer of fable-land. Arabella Fenwick had not Selina's tallness and elegant proportions, but she was pretty, of a livelier turn, and could sing sweetly, accompanying herself on the pianoforte.

And she was his friend's sister. Well Dan knew that nothing would give Fen, as he affectionately called him, so much pleasure and satisfaction as to become his brother-in-law.

But Arabella had no rich aunt, and although generally speaking these jolly farmers scouted the notion of marrying for money, Dan's aspirations after gentility made him hesitate. Anticipating Fen's possible disappointment he would sometimes say: "I assure you, old chap, you town fellows are never more at sea than when you suppose us farmers to be coining money. Farming is nothing like what it was in my father's time, and when Clem makes up his mind to clear out and start on his own account I shall have to borrow money at five per cent. A nice prospect that in these deucedly bad times!"

The unqualified medical assistant could, of course, only agree with him, secretly hoping that if Arabella missed the elder brother she might win the younger. Hitherto Clem had withstood all his advances, but his sister was invited with the Atwells to Oxborrow one afternoon, taking tea at the farm. Such an opportunity was golden and, as it most fortuitously happened, he had brought her a quite incomparable little bonnet from the Passage de Choiseul.

"A bonnet, monsieur," had said the no less incomparable little milliner, "which—if as monsieur says, mademoiselle his sister resembles him in feature and complexion—will render her irresistible, absolutely irresistible," she added, as having adjusted it to her own pretty little head, she complacently drank in his admiration of both work of art and wearer.

On Miss Selina's fine figure and Mrs. Cribb's Three

ents. Mr. Fenwick had no designs whatever. Most ently in those happy-go-lucky days deserving as- nts married their patron's daughter, the dignity of er being appended to that of son-in-law. The cal calling thus became a process of evolution. A g man originally employed in manipulating pestle mortar, vaccinating infants and feeling pulses in the house, step by step attained the position and ority of a full-blown practitioner. And as medical ce more than any other depends upon accumulated rience, who can say? the silly people, swallowing ric's pills, of whom our great philosopher writes, aps fared no worse than their more fastidious ren.

CHAPTER XII.

MRS. ATWELL'S TEA-PARTY.

HARDLY could Clem believe his senses w
days later he found himself bound with D
Atwell's tea-party. The one quality that m
other serviceable was lacking in the younge
He wanted moral courage, and an incident o
ceding afternoon had brought about the relu
sion.

"I say, Clem, bor," Uncle Ephraim had sa
him by the button on the Corn Exchange an
ominously, "I say, Clem, bor, I've a bone to
you."

It was now Clem's turn to blush, but unl
no weather-glass afforded an excuse for retrea
cast as a schoolboy in sight of pedagogic
tipped his little brown paper bag.

"There's a sample of Talavera for you, 1
got out, turning over the rich red grains in hi

The old farmer winking still more knowi
back a little, Clem also edged away from th
buyers and sellers.

"Who'd have thought that a harmless-loo
like you would be running after backstair m
he began. "Why, I supposed you couldn't

o a goose where females were concerned. But look ou here, Clem, you and I, thank God, don't come of a ow lot, and take my advice, have nothing to do with a girl you don't mean to have asked in church."

"Uncle——" stammered poor Clem, but could get no farther.

"That's all I had to say to you and my meaning is good. I'm not one to meddle or make with other folks' business as you know, but——" here he dropped his voice. "I couldn't help catching sight of a bonnet and shawl t'other day when I took you so by surprise, and I can tell a heron from a hernshaw as well as another. I knew well enough you wouldn't have been that put out at seeing me for nothing."

"Uncle Ephraim, true as I stand here"—began Clem, resolute to make a clean breast of it.

"There, there, that'll do, I've said my say and eased my mind. Now let's have a look at your sample," the other replied, evidently resolved to breathe no word more on the subject and to keep Clem's counsel. But the disclosure had made him terribly uneasy. If his secret was in uncle Ephraim's hand might it not be the property of others also? Who could tell? Master Wix, the odd man, had sharp eyes, and could put two and wo together as well as any lawyer going. What if he lso had caught sight of Martha's bonnet and shawl in he store-room? For the present he determined upon ehaving with the utmost possible circumspection. He vould not only accept the Ipswich invitation but throw lust in Dan's eyes by showing a little attention to Ara- ella Fenwick. His brother's marriage would make everything easy, their partnership once dissolved he

could snap his fingers at opposition or interference. Meantime he must mind his P's and Q's.

Well might the pair feel overcome on entering the precincts of what seemed gentility verging on high life.

The substantial farmer of those days still lived very much as had done sire and grandsire before him; his best parlour being unused except on the occasion of wedding feasts and funeral banquets; his literature strictly limited to almanacs and a single weekly paper. During his hey-day and bachelorhood Christmas dances, regattas, races and an occasional trip to Harwich by steamer making up the sum-total of yearly recreation, benedicts contenting themselves with the market dinner once a week and a visit to relations during the full moon. As yet little else diversified these uneventful, uncritical but honest and fairly contented lives.

Younger men who like Danvers and Clem had attended a grammar school now began to look around them and imitate their more modish neighbours of the town. They no longer followed plough and harrow, occupying themselves with lighter tasks. To rake after the waggon in haysel, shock sheaves in the harvest field, measure out corn and oilcake and feed the pigs, was not considered derogatory on the part of a gentleman-farmer. To this title Dan had long aspired. Leaving practical matters in Clem's hands he had gradually assumed cosmopolitan taste and polish. He subscribed to the Ipswich Mechanic's Institution, packing his gig-box with *Ernest Maltravers*, *Oliver Twist*, and even Miss Martineau's *Illustrations of Political Economy*. It was very little that his farming acquaintances saw of him now, and many a quizzical comment was passed upon his

haughtiness and unsociability. But nothing Dan cared, and if he felt that the ways of the world were yet to be learned, no suspicion of inferiority ever disturbed his self-confidence. The refining influences of a trip to Paris were in his case he deemed all but supererogation. As to Clem's loutish behaviour, did it not serve the purpose of a most desirable set-off? He liked to have Clem at his elbow wherever he went. No sooner had the pair crossed Mr. Atwell's, rather Mrs. Cribb's, threshold than Dan delightedly sniffed the aroma of gentility.

Bustling, unaffected little Mrs. Atwell received the visitors in a breakfast parlour, her pretty, care-seamed features flushed with pleasurable excitement. How much better tasted these films of bread and butter, these cupfuls of tea served in choice Worcester, than the vulgar profuseness of a farm-house table! thought Dan, his eyes and ears alert, not the least little particular escaping his observation. They had hardly said "How d'ye do," when Fen entered with Arabella, unfortunately unable to wear her Parisian bonnet at an evening party, but looking seductive enough in a pink tarlatan dress, and roses to match in her hair. Noticing that the unqualified medical assistant wore no gloves, quick as lightning Dan pocketed his own, making signs to Clem that he should follow the example. The lightest hint proved a lesson.

"So glad to see you, Arabella, dear, and you gentlemen, safe home again. Who'd have thought that this time only last week you were both in Paris! And Mr. Clement, too, an unexpected pleasure," she added. "Well, I hope you will all enjoy yourselves, I'm sure. Selina has got up a charade and after that and a little

music, she wants to have a dance, that is, if Mrs. C doesn't object. I do so trust she won't object."

The wish was uttered in a confidential and resigned tone, much as if the fact of Mrs. Cribb's objecting was hardly to be hoped for.

"Mrs. Cribb is highly nervous," she went on, a plied her visitors with diaphanous bread and butte genteel little cakes, "and may object to the noise shaking of the floor, but I do so hope she won't."

Then other guests streamed in, one and all be ing to precisely the same social area or borde separating two definite areas. It was a society up a fringes, of folks who like the flower in the P apologue, not being the rose were content to live it. Statesmanship was represented by a clerk Goverment office, finance by a banking-house ca law by Mr. Atwell and one of his colleagues, me by two gallant knights of the pestle, letters by the editor of a local journal, and the fine arts by a dr master. Shopkeeping had been rigidly excluded a genteel.

Perhaps next to Dan, who despite the sacrifi his moustache represented Parisian style and finish Frederick Fenwick and his nameless companion ferred most distinction on the assemblage.

Nameless indeed in the correct and unpleasar ceptation of the term, Mr. Cornelius —— was not. bar sinister necessitated his anonymity; if of humbl came of worthy and most reputable stock. But sat in other respects as he was with his lot Mr. Cor —— had a thorn in his side, in other words, a sounding, disconcertingly preposterous surname.

not having fifty pounds to spare for the legal adaptation of a patronymic to his taste he simply discarded the one with which fortune had saddled him. Reverting to patriarchal usage he was simply Cornelius, Dr. Cornelius rustic patients called him, and portly, pompous, of good appearance, well up in professional phraseology, he might well have passed for a shining light of the healing art. Like a curate growing grey without preferment Dr. Cornelius had reached his forty-fifth year in apprenticeship, and there was now small prospect of such apprenticeship ending in credentials. Mr. Cornelius, we should say Dr. Cornelius, however, possessed that inestimable treasure, a contented mind, a plenteous board to sit down to, an imposing roadster for his professional rounds, the unbounded confidence of his patients made his face shine. Only one bugbear could ruffle that prevailing good humour. He was ready to run anyone through the body who pronounced his loathed surname.

"Not a bit changed, either of you," was Mr. Atwell's uncomplimentary remark, as amid general applause Dan and his fellow-traveller entered the room. "On my word, you haven't turned a hair."

"Did you think that the air of Paris would have set us growing, sir?" asked Fen, who prided himself upon his wit and repartee.

Enthroned on her high chair Mrs. Cribb surveyed the scene with an air of complacent severity. She had seen Paris, and immediately began comparing notes with Dan, a favourite of hers and a prospective nephew-in-law.

"The French capital is doubtless changed in many respects since I visited it twenty-five years ago with the

late lamented Mr. Cribb," she began, "but the frivolous, misguided people! I fear that they wi remain what Goldsmith described them, you do remember those lines in the 'Traveller.'

'Thus idly busy rolls their world away.'"

"I must say they know how to enjoy thems Dan replied, anxious to show off his newly ac French. "*Savoir vivre*—of course you unde French, ma'am?—that is what one learns ov water."

"And to wag the tongue, Mr. Fison, what g they are, no Blair to remind them of eternal You probably know those beautiful lines——"

Mrs. Cribb's favourite quotation was cut sh the approach of other guests, and the room filling.

CHAPTER XIII.

MRS. ATWELL'S TEA-PARTY CONTINUED.

"WHAT a posse of 'em, to be sure!" exclaimed Mr. Atwell to Clem as the pair waited by the door, the young farmer feeling anything but at home. "Are you a good hand at guessing charades, Mr. Clement?" added the host.

"A charade, what's that?" was the naïve reply.

"You'll soon see. Ah! the folding doors are opening. On my word, this is as good as going to the play."

In the back drawing-room Selina, wearing spectacles, mob-cap, kerchief on her shoulders, and checked apron, and wielding a birch, personated a dame school-mistress, around her standing half a dozen make-believe scholars. One very tall young lady made a Brobdingnagian school miss in short low-necked, short-sleeved frock, and white tucked trousers reaching to the ankle. An equally tall young man had squeezed himself into a lad's jacket; a pinafore here, a very short pair of trousers there did duty for the rest.

Miss Selina then set her pupils to spelling, one word after another proving a pitfall, finally, laying her birch freely about their shoulders she dismissed the little troop in disgrace, all blubbering and crying Oh, oh! oh! at the top of their voices.

"The first syllable of the word we are to guess," Mr. Atwell observed to Clem; he had kindly taken the diffident guest under his wing. "I haven't the slightest notion of what they're all driving at, have you, Mr. Clement?"

"No more than the man in the moon, Mr. Atwell. I'm quite a fish out of water here," was the reply, Clem nevertheless beginning to be diverted in spite of himself.

The next scene represented an arbour. Mr. Atwell's old-fashioned armchair being tapestried with ivy and laburnum. Here ensconced with arms entwined Selina and Arabella personated two lovelorn maidens who in this retreat had harkened to false lovers' vows, the pair, after lachrymose confidences, relieving their feelings with a duet, the burden of which was that both were resolved to pine away and die.

"One more act to come, Mr. Clement, and then we shall all look foolish enough, I'll warrant; for certain it is no one will hit the right nail on the head," said Mr. Atwell. Then he looked anxiously towards the high chair. "I'm afraid the noise is a little too much for Mrs. Cribb," he said; "my sister is so nervous. Ah! the doors open again, it will soon be over now."

The final scene evoked more subdued applause and merriment than its predecessors, lookers-on with Mr. Atwell glancing at Mrs. Cribb as they clapped their hands and laughed aloud.

It was Dr. Cornelius's turn to display his histrionic powers. Putting on the solemnity and authoritative air of some renowned leech, he pompously diagnosed a hypochondriac patient, his colleague in the medical profession, wearing Mr. Atwell's shabby plaid dressing-gown

and well-worn carpet slippers, putting out his tongue, having his pulse felt with all the self-pitying lackadaisicalness of a malingerer or professional invalid.

Here Dr. Cornelius hardly parodied himself. With as much pompousness and gravity, watch in hand, would he feel pulses when representing qualified medical science in thatched cottages or the poor-house. With pedantry scarcely less ludicrous would he roll out quadruple, quintuple, sextuple syllabled terms, thereby, as his naïve listeners expressed it, making their flesh creep; then, awakening merriment rather than awe here, he wound up with a long peroration, propounding this, conjecturing that, opining one thing, prognosticating another; finally informing the gasping terrified invalid that his symptoms were so complicated he could only throw out a hypothesis, a supposition; he had better start for London at once and consult Sir Benjamin Brodie!

After a good deal of timorously reined-in applause, all present having been cautioned as to Mrs. Cribb's nerves, guessing began. Random hits followed each other in quick succession, the actors delightedly finding everyone hopelessly at fault. When a quarter of an hour had been spent by the company to no purpose, a sepulchral voice issued from the high chair.

"O—pine—opine," Mrs. Cribb said, her thin lips not curving, her expression nevertheless becoming almost genial. More than mortal must have been Mrs. Cribb had she not unbent at such a moment. Hands were now clapped, bravos uttered in her honour. Such perspicacity was really wonderful.

"Opine, what's that?" Clem asked of his mentor, whose side he never quitted.

"Opine, you have me there, Mr. Clement, it must be a medical term. I'll ask one of our young doctors when they have put themselves straight," was the reply. "Ah! here come refreshments, I'm sure we all want them."

With the trays of wine and cake Mrs. Atwell now peeped in, stealing a minute or two from her supervision of tea, refreshments and supper, the self-effacing little woman only snatching furtive glimpses of the festive party. She now stole up to her sister-in-law.

"Would you like Arabella to give us a song, Georgiana?" she asked, much as if demanding a favour.

"I do not object, Carrie," Mrs. Cribb answered condescendingly.

So with many a blush and titter Arabella sat down to the piano; artlessly as way-side linnet, trilling the lay dear to our sentimental grandmothers, "You are going far away, far away from poor Jeannette," followed by the more cheerful, "Why don't the man propose, Mamma;" the first evoking pensiveness, the second a chorus of laughter.

Next Mrs. Cribb was asked if she would like a song from Mr. Fenwick, her answer being as before, she did not object. Thereupon with patriotic fervour Fen gave, "A fine old English gentleman," his hearers enthusiastically joining in the last line.

All this time Dan was drawing comparisons, saying to himself how much more to his taste was such refined and intellectual recreation than the unchastened, not to say, low-bred entertainments of a farm-house, the country dance almost degenerating into a romp, hunt the slipper, blind-man's buff and forfeits, blozzed, biffin-cheeked misses, now thumping a fellow on the shoulder

with an old shoe, now tearing his coat in the second and even more repulsive game, next paying the prescribed forfeit of a kiss with resounding smack.

Then the vulgar profuseness of home-made refreshments, tea and supper tables so loaden that you could not put a pin between dish and dish, and the final tumblers of hot grog, how truly disgusting was it all! Clem could do as he chose, none of your dairymaids for himself, he said. And he felt that he had only to say a word and either prize was his. He glanced from belle to belle, from the dollish little figure in pink tarlatan, with the perpetually approving smile, to her taller, more imposing and passive bosom friend.

Both girls appealed to the prospective wooer rather by what they represented than by what they were. Alike Selina and Arabella personated gentility, even high life, the world to which Dan aspired. So naturally inanimate was Selina that in the rather crude blue silk gown, admirably setting off her large handsome features and splendid hair of many shaded, wavy brown, she recalled some figure painted on glass, immobile chorister of a mediæval German artist. Selina indeed had inherited something of her aunt's neutralness and impassibility. She did not care very much for one thing more than another, approval generally amounted to an unspoken—I do not object.

There was only one possibility to which Miss Selina strongly, even ardently, objected. The thought of passing her existence in spinsterhood sharpened her faculties as much as it was possible to do so. Without in the least making advances, that would have been ungenteel, she pleased Dan's vanity by a hundred little artifices.

Thus when he said, "What delightful surprises you have in store for us, Miss Atwell," Selina made a matter-of-fact reply, "One's friends don't go to Paris every day. It is only natural that we should make much of them when they come back."

Mrs. Atwell, whose enjoyment of most things had to be done vicariously, now found time for a peep at the fine doings, a little chat with sips of port wine and nibblings of plum-cake. Fortified by these stimulants she sidled up to her awe-inspiring sister-in-law:—

"There is no one else to sing now and the young people would very much like a dance, just a polka or two and Sir Roger de Coverley to wind up with?"

Whereupon as before Mrs. Cribb's reply was a condescending: "I do not object, Carrie."

Partners were chosen, Mrs. Atwell, who had been a governess in early days and was something of a musician, struck up a polka; schottische followed, next that most exhilarating dance, the gallopade.

All this while, beyond helping with the hand-clapping and refreshments, Clem's part had been that of a supernumary. To passive endurance, even boredom, had gradually succeeded a sociable mood. As pair after pair flashed past the piano by which he stood he felt almost tempted to try his skill and tread a measure. True, unlike Dan, he knew nothing of steps and measures, but he had joined in the country dance and the thing seemed so easy!

On a sudden a piercing shriek was heard, Mrs. Atwell sprang from her music stool, some of the dancers stood stock-still, others dragged their half fainting partners to the nearest seat; white as sheets, the servants skurried

up from the kitchen. Mr. Atwell laying hold of the bell-rope pulled it violently. Except for the immobile figure on the high chair, all was tumult and alarm.

Like one seized with sudden frenzy Clem had flung himself upon the hindmost pair of dancers, the onslaught almost bringing Dan to the ground and making his partner scream with terror.

"What the thousand devils——" Dan's furious objurgation stopped short, a glance told him what had happened.

But indeed for Clem's lightning-like promptitude that fascinating tarlatan gown of Arabella's would very likely have proved the poor little thing's doom.

Made according to fashion with long hanging sleeves, as she whisked past the piano one of these had flicked a waxlight, in a second being ablaze, a second more and the many furbelowed skirt worn over an equally combustious slip must have blazed also.

Adroit as well as timely had been Clem's intervention, Arabella escaping with a fright, and, of course, fainting-fit. Catching up the sleeve so as to save her arm he put out the flame with his hands, regardless of burns.

Hartshorn, smelling-salts, douches of cold water and sips of cordial having restored calm, Clem, of course, became the hero of the evening. All the fair dancers now wanted to feed him, his hands being painfully excoriated, but Arabella would permit no one else to aid her preserver.

"And what a mercy that we had two medical men present!" observed Mr. Atwell proudly; "what otherwise would have become of us all, God only knows!"

Having ministered to the ladies Fen and his colleague

swathed poor Clem's hands in oatmeal, making him look like a boxer prepared for an encounter. Amid much common congratulation the party sat down to supper. Paris and the boulevards were now quite thrown into the shade. For once the country bumpkin had eclipsed his superior brother!

CHAPTER XIV.

SAM WEEDON MAKES A NOSEGAY.

s that your last heater, Martha?"
t can be, uncle," Martha replied; "I mean if so be
ou're minded for a walk."
Then put away those box-irons and fetch your
t and shawl," said the fish salesman. "I'm minded
Mr. Weedon, and there's a brace o' fine mackerel
't get rid of this mornin', they'd make a sort of
and, we shan't seem to intrude like."
n a minute or two, uncle, but my heater is hot
d like just to finish ironing your Sunday shirt."
There's no particular hurry," was the patient reply;
ıy respects uncle Jethro being patience personified.
upreme deprivation, as we have seen, had mini-
lesser evils, loss of sight rendering him proof
t small vexations. It was only when convictions
outraged that the fierceness and austerity of the
ı spirit broke forth.
a quarter of an hour the pair set out; blind Rose
pondering, Martha also deep in thought. From
ıxiety she was free. An outbreak of measles at
row indefinitely prolonged her holiday. Mr. Paglar
is family were away, the parish being left in
of a *locum tenens,* that terrible threat of dis-

missal no longer haunted alike her sleeping and waki hours.

But Clem's silence—what could it mean? Had th last unlucky adventure so far alarmed him that he dar not drop a missive into the oak trunk? Or worse s had an inkling of the adventure reached Mr. Dan's ea And again and again she accused herself of somethi worse than folly, the end of which would be the falli into a decline and a broken heart. She should ne care about anybody, not even her own flesh and blo again, or about anything, never, never! Then, for se mentality was the fashion, Martha conjured up a lach mose scene: Clem kneeling beside her dying bed wh she feebly gasped out forgiveness and a blessing. pathetic the self-drawn picture that poor foolish lit Martha wiped her streaming eyes.

Their way led through scenes of quiet yet penetr ing charm. Here nothing startled, no sudden feat evoked rapturous exclamation, the final stage in pastor ness resembled the first. Yet the very spirit of beat brooded over all. Nothing could here be added or tak away.

From gently sloping meadow after meadow, the lo rich grass starred with daisies, they passed into mar acred fields of deep green corn, sweeps of purple clo and stretches of breezy fallow, side paths by lofty hedg walls of waxen green here and there heavy with m blossom.

The wide level landscape rang with subdued not rather a blending of many; above these from time time might be heard the tap, tap of the wood-pecker oaken copse; the stock-dove's low caressing coo, a voi

to soothe mortal care; farther off came the sudden, swiftly vanishing note of the cuckoo; overhead larks trilled joyously, whilst, cawing loud, rooks wheeled by in stately ploy.

Insensibly the pair yielded to the exquisiteness of the hour; blind Rose contentedly sniffed the may-scented air and Martha quitting his arm gathered a flower or two.

"The grass will soon be cut, you must bring me here again in haysel," said the old man. "It's next door to seein' a hayfield to smell the hay in the turnin'. I hear sheep a-nibblin' and a-scuttlin' and we've climbed a bit, we're just there, I should say, Martha?"

There was no such thing as a climb hereabouts, but the final meadow bringing them to the farm sloped sharply, their path being a rugged footway worn in the turf.

"We're nigh the gate, uncle, and Mr. Weedon sees us; he's coming out," Martha replied.

"Master Rose and no other!" exclaimed Sam with some surprise, for except in his rounds the fish salesman had never paid him a visit. "Come inside, into the keepin'-room. I hope I see you well," he added.

"Good tightly, the Lord be praised, Mr. Weedon. But we're not parlour company," said the old preacher, who always prided himself on his humility.

"Tut, tut," rejoined Sam, leading the way. "You just come along o' me, both of you," he said, not without embarrassment; this unexpected visit he felt sure had something to do with Adah's escapade.

Throwing wide the door of the unused, musty-smelling little parlour he bade his visitors be seated on the

"sofy," a sofa was always thus called, then going straight to the chiffonier brought out decanter and beakers.

"You'll have a glass of sherry wine with which to wish me well, and you too," he went on, now for the first time addressing Martha.

"I thank ye kindly, Mr. Weedon, but I'm middlin' dry, I'd as lief have a glass o' ale."

"And I'm much beholden to you, Mr. Weedon, but I'll take the liberty of declining both," was Martha's prim reply, a reply that pleased Sam, he could not help contrasting speech and manner with the behaviour of that rip, her sister.

Fetching a jug of his best home brewed from the cellar, he poured out a frothing tumbler for his guest, then filled another for himself and with a reciprocated, "Here's towards you," the pair emptied their glasses.

"There's no sherry wine that beats harvest beer," began Master Rose. "You'll hardly believe what I say, Mr. Weedon, but true as I sit here I feel that there beer a-tingling in my great toe." Then, ever fearful of dwelling over-much on carnal matters, he continued: "But Noah is a warnin' to the most God-fearin' of us, and thankin' you all the same I won't take another drop. Hand your basket to Mr. Weedon, Martha. I've just taken on myself to offer you a couple of fine mackerel I couldn't get rid of to-day, and seein' as how I wanted to speak to you about somethin' else I've killed two birds with one stone."

"I'm sure its very neighbourly of you, and though it happens I brought some herrin's from Ipswich to-day, store is no sore, as they say, and I'll take them and welcome."

Here Martha put in a timid word.

"If boiled and soused in vinegar and spice they'll keep a length of time, Mr. Weedon," she said, as she handed the basket.

Again Sam eyed her approvingly; the housewifely thought, the gentle voice, above all the modest retiringness of look and manner, struck him by force of contrast. For Adah's image still haunted his mind disturbingly; he could not forget her bold black eyes and sharp diverting tongue. Martha's gentle figure now interposed itself between himself and his seductress, obliterating an odious past.

The first step in love-making is like a first coin laid on the gambling-table, swept into limbo, utterly regardless of consequences it may be, the player nathless outs with another and another and another.

What moreover beautifies a woman's face like the light of love? Just as duality sweetens and intensifies character so Martha's eyes had gained depth and pathos since belonging to her lover. The artless tenderness of her nature now fully awakened lent additional charm to features already winning, and being in love herself she felt deep pity for all who were not. Auspicious or doomed to heart-breaking illusion, what else was life but love? Could the unloved, the unloving, be said to live at all?

"They're master fish and no mistake," Sam said, as he placed the mackerel on a dish and handed Martha her basket; "and though my woman takes on finely if I meddle or make in the kitchen, I'll tell her what you say about the picklin'. And as I was a sayin', Master

Rose, its main neighbourly of you to come all that way o' purpose to bring 'em."

"You're out there, Mr. Weedon," began the blind man, by this time having framed his speech; "I had another errand to this here house, and peradventure I needn't go into particulars. But the sons of Belial have troubled me and mine, and I'd have liefer go into the house* than the likes on it should happen."

"There, there, don't make a piece o' work about nothin', Master Rose," broke in the farmer, his ears tingling. "Mawthers will be mawthers and nannick when they get a chance. I bear the young woman no sort o' malice. But if you won't have another glass, let's take a look round. You'd like a turn in the garden, I daresay," he added to Martha.

"There's nothin' I've always set my face against more than mockin' a fellow-creature," the blind man went on, determined that his carefully formulated palinode should not remain unheard. "'When the scorner is punished, the simple is made wise,' saith Solomon; many's the time I've preached about Elisha and the she-bears who tare forty-two of the children that mocked his bald head. Little did I think that my own flesh and blood would anger the Lord by the same evil behaviour. Like Job I speak of course in parables. I'm a-sittin' all day among the potsherds and ashes on account of that girl's goings-on. She, my own sister's child, born of good living parents, married in church——"

"Come, come, Master Rose, as I was a-sayin' there's naught to make such a to-do about; the little hussy has

* The poor-house.

ıad her spree, and I've got my ten pound back, no ɔones are broken."

"You're the last man to bear malice I know, Mr. Weedon; but I wasn't a-goin' to let you think that I'd ɔverlook it. As a father and a preacher of the Gospel have I talked to Adah; coals of fire, coals of juniper have I heaped upon her head for her soul's good."

"And I feel sure she is very sorry for having tricked you, Mr. Weedon," Martha ventured to put in.

The gentle voice soothed Sam's irritation. Hitherto he had fidgeted in his chair, the very name of yesterday's enchantress making his cheeks hot. He now laid hold of the old man's arm.

"Come," he said "let's go abroad. The least said, the soonest mended, and you've one here who won't give you any trouble, I'll warrant."

Martha coloured self-reprovingly, uncle Jethro merely replying, as somewhat loth he took up his crome-stick:—

"The Lord trieth the heart," he said with a sigh. "May your words prove true."

Then they passed into the little box-bordered garden, Sam piling Martha's basket with the biggest peony, the most perfect gilly-flowers, the prettiest pansies, the shapeliest sprigs of lavender and rosemary. Then he took them round the farmyard, and disappearing for a moment returned from the fowl-house with his pockets full of new-laid eggs.

"Whitsun is nigh upon us," he said, as one by one ıe took them out; "nothin' like fresh eggs for custards. There, there, no standin' on ceremony, Master Rose, rou're welcome to what I've got; you don't come by nackerel for nothin'."

Still protesting, for in his way Master Rose was a folks said good tightly proud, the old man passed ou Martha now lending him a hand.

"Good evening to you, Mr. Weedon, and I than you kindly for the posy and the eggs," she said at th garden gate, accompanying the speech with a pensiv smile. What in reality were the farmer's flowers to her But the carefully culled nosegay recalled many anothe the once daily offering on the schoolroom sill. Wit what heart-beats, rapturous tears and kisses had sh caught up these?

"I wish you good evening, and bring your unc again afore long, its pleasant abroad o' summer nights Sam replied, shaking hands with both. "And there always somethin' or other in the garden you're welcon to," he added, the speech rewarded as had been h hope by another smile of which he did not understar the pathos.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WALK.

"As we've come so far we'll just see Master Fitch about the bee skeps he's promised me," uncle Jethro said. "A dweller in the field of the slothful he is, I'm afraid, for it's nigh on three weeks I should have had them."

Mechanically Martha turned into the drift or wooded lane on this side leading from Sam Weedon's to the turnpike road and Oxborrow. There is no more beautiful feature of Suffolk than these drifts separating field and fallow, broad avenues of veteran oak and elm, umbrageous, bird-haunted seclusions invaded only by turnip-cart or ploughman's team. So closely massed was the foliage here that twilight reigned throughout the summer day. At either end the wayfarer emerged from deep golden gloom into blinding radiance.

The pair trudged on, hardly interchanging a word. Master Rose, his head ever in one position after the manner of the blind, occasionally noted a bird's song or a whiff of clover; from time to time Martha told him that the grass would soon be ready for mowing here, the beans were almost on the blow there, that was all. One or two neighbours passed by with a mere: "Night, Master Rose; night, Martha," but few folks were on the

turnpike road at such an hour. Labourers bound homeward always struck into field paths, and it was only on market and fair days that gig after gig rattled by.

In the village summer nights were always animated. Behind the Swan Inn a score or so of hudderens were playing bowls; whilst on the bench before the house half-a-dozen habitual customers, carters, jobbers or pig-dealers, rat-catchers and the like, sipped their pewter pot of ale, interchanging jokes and greetings with passers-by, hitting most with railleries. As a rule no one was spared, the solemnity of blind Rose's visitation securing him from similar treatment. Banter these village wags must, but when they made fun of the old fish salesman it was anent some unusually scathing onslaught upon themselves.

"Just in time, Master Rose, to have a drop with smart young chaps like yourself," cried Ben Catchpole; "here's one leastways ready to stand you a pint, if so be that you're dry. And you, young woman," he added to Martha, "welcome as the flowers in May you'll be to a seat on this here bench."

"Can't you tell one mawther from another, you mole," interrupted Teddie Sadler, the pig-dealer; "you're only a-wastin' your breath, you won't get any nannickin' out of her. She's no more like Adah than chalk is like cheese."

Martha dropped her eyelids without making reply; Master Rose also seemed disinclined to speak. That mention of Adah ruffled him.

"We're all well meanin', Master Rose," remarked Ben, "and you know I was always a limb for a joke. Come, don't be that peevish, but just wet your whistle without

expense when you have the chance. Master Betts," he called to the host, "another pint and here's the reckonin' for both," as he spoke holding out a fourpenny bit.

The inn-keeper knew blind Rose too well to heed the order; but Ben, bent upon a joke, sprang forward and seized the old man by the arm.

"Come, Master Rose, take a man when he's in the mind, Martha looks ready to faint, I'm sure a little rest and a drop o' beer would do her good."

"Have a care," the old man said severely; "you're strangely forgettin' yourself, Ben Catchpole."

The short stern rebuke proved effective. Ben drew back, jeers now falling to his own share, and the pair continued their way. But it was not Ben Catchpole's rough pleasantry that had whitened Martha's cheeks and made her knees tremble.

The ale-house faced the turnpike road, and a little farther off on the opposite side stood the brothers' farm-house. Just as uncle Jethro and his guide reached the bench of revellers, a gay, merry quartette passed out of the front gate.

That afternoon the Atwell party had taken tea with the young farmers. "The solicitor" and elder ladies returned in a fly, the two girls preferring to walk home and the escort of their cavaliers.

With the abnormally sharp eyes of love and jealousy, her agitation, fortunately for herself attributable to other causes, Martha took in every detail.

In front Danvers had paired off with a tall, elegant young lady wearing a white muslin dress and blue silk scarf thrown gracefully over her shoulders. Merely glancing at Selina and her companion who seemed in

airy, lover-like spirits, Martha narrowly watched the couple immediately behind them.

Clem's partner in the walk appeared to poor distracted Martha a quite sylph-like fairy-tale being. Little wonder, she said to herself, that Clem evidently regarded her in the same light.

Arabella wore her Parisian bonnet, a work of art which of itself conferred bewitchingness. Tuscan straw and moss roses had never surely been so inimitably put together. And like Selina she wore white muslin with a light scarf of pink crape, which Clem now wanted to carry. Martha could not hear what passed between them, but it was as evident that the pair were playfully quarrelling, and at last Arabella yielded; the pink scarf was confided to Clem's care, also the nosegay, doubtless of his gathering.

Had he caught sight of her? Then she chided herself for the foolish question. He could no more help seeing them than seeing the ale-house and hearing the noisy group seated on the bench. And what mattered it all? In such company even if his heart were hers still, recognition was out of the question.

But the toying with the scarf, the posy? Martha's heart sunk within her as she recalled other flower gatherings, the offerings on the window-sill, the daily message conveyed by pansy, forget-me-not and everlasting.

"You're tremblin' like an aspen leaf, Martha," observed her companion. "Let the children of Bethel be. Their turn will come, for judgments are prepared for scorners and stripes for the back of fools."

"They didn't mean any harm, uncle," pleaded

Martha. Conscious of her own shortcomings she was ever on the lookout to excuse others.

"Don't talk to me like that, Martha. Doth not Solomon say, the thought of foolishness is sin and the scorner is an abomination to men?"

In silence the pair plodded on, a turn of the road now hiding Clem and his dainty charge from view.

Meantime the young farmer was secretly chuckling over his own cleverness.

He was hoodwinking Dan and no mistake, he said to himself; by this affected admiration of Arabella skilfully disarming suspicion. Should a hint reach his brother's ears about Martha, here was the reply.

The neat little figure in cotton gown, checked shawl and straw bonnet had been caught sight of, but without in the least disconcerting him. Under no circumstances could they have done more than interchange a good evening before the ale-house, and Martha's jealous fears, if indeed she was foolish enough to have any, should be set at rest by a missive. For the life of him he dared not fix a trysting place just yet.

So putting away possibly disturbing thoughts he did his utmost to mislead Dan. One part of his task was at first onerous. Clem felt no embarrassment at the Christmas dance of neighbours, he could get on pleasantly enough with rustic belles, those ruddy-cheeked, unsophisticated damsels of whom a local wag had cruelly written—

> By their rubicund hue, you could not be mistaken,
> 'Tis seen at a glance they have driven on bacon.

But of boarding school misses who played the piano and

parlez-vous'd, who minced in their gait and spoke genteelly he had no experience.

Fortunately Miss Arabella soon set him at his ease. No finished coquette, no mistress of repartee or persiflage was the medical assistant's sister. Flimsy as her summer gown was the furniture of that pretty little head. But like the cat in the fable, whilst devoid of many arts she possessed one worth a thousand. Unable to shine herself, Arabella knew how, none better, to make others shine, at least in their own estimation. Before they had got a few hundred yards, Clem was appealed to as an authority, a hundred or two more and he was wondering why he had always set himself down as a stupid fellow, and by the time they reached Ipswich Arabella had convinced him that he was a young man of quite uncommon parts.

"Dear me, Mr. Clement," simpered the young lady, "what a stupid little thing you must think me! I always fancied that wheat was sown in spring like mustard and cress! How nice it is to know things, to be sure! And just fancy butter sometimes taking a whole day to churn. I wonder if I could ever make it come, wouldn't I like to try!"

And, of course, against his conscience, Clem said that he was sure Saranne would let her try if she would come over with her friend one churning day. Then they talked of farm-yard marauders, and very artfully Arabella wormed out of him one exploit after another: how a week before he had brought down a hawk, that very morning a kite, both just swooping upon young birds; how night after night he had kept watch by the fowl-house, finally capturing a most unusually knowing

old fox. Then finding that his fair listener's appetite for adventure was properly whetted, he recounted his crowning deed, how one winter night in his shirt and stockingless he had chased a pig-poisoner through a couple of fields, overpowering him not without what he inelegantly described as "the deuce of a tussle".

"And to think that you should have saved my life, Mr. Clement!" Arabella said sweetly; adding with deep drawn sigh, "I can never repay you, never, never, that is the worst of it."

"No, that is the best of it," Clem retorted gallantly, "one likes doing things so much for——" the dangerous word love was on his lips, he pulled himself up in time—"for the pleasure of doing them than for the sake of reward. I'm sure, I was never more pleased in my life than when I found out that you hadn't so much as a scar."

"And your own poor hands so shockingly burnt! How generous, how!" was the reply, uttered in tones of penetrating sweetness.

"Only a flea-bite," Clem rejoined; "you should have seen me after our haystack caught fire last year. My fists then looked like half-boiled rumpsteak." Selina was taking things much less ceremoniously than her bosom friend. In her case there was no necessity of bringing out a timid admirer nor was she careful to shine herself. Miss Atwell's attitude, indeed, for the most part resembled her aunt's, it was hardly one of liking this, that, or the other, but of not objecting. There was only one eventuality to which she emphatically objected. The prospect of living and dying in spinsterhood, but for its remoteness, would have made her wretched. If Dan's

personality awakened no raptures at least she was satisfied with his circumstances, perhaps a very good approximation of his own sentiments. Miss Selina was moreover well aware that she shone by reflected light. Homage was rendered not only to her father's daughter but to Mrs. Cribb's niece. And Dan did not discern that he was making up to "a young woman, her name was Dull".

Just as a grandee's underlings will ever be full of his own grandeeship and of his grandeeship's wife, sons and daughters and the strangers within his gates, so Mrs. Cribb's next-of-kin had her objections, non-objections and Three per cents on their lips in season and out of season.

But the topic was differently handled in the zones of acquaintanceship and intimacy. Hedged round by respect was Mrs. Cribb where the world was concerned among friends and familiars the great lady became quite another personality: "My sister, the late Mr. Cribb's wife;" "My sister-in-law who is so much better off than ourselves, you know;" "Aunt Georgiana to whom money is no object," then became, "That out and out old maid;" "That tiresome old thing;" "That plague of our lives," and so on, such expletives no little relieving a perpetual sense of subordination and restraint.

So Selina prattled loftily of Mrs. Cribb's wealth and benefactions, Dan drinking in utterances. The air of opulence was intoxicating to him, he really persuaded himself that he was enamoured of the speaker.

"Aunt Georgiana often talks of keeping a pony phaeton, how nice it would be to drive!" she said.

"Persuade her then, for I am sure," was the gallant rejoinder, "that you could do so if you tried."

Selina smiled, and if a trifle artificial the smile immensely improved the long, rather large-featured but handsome face.

"How you flatter! But Aunt Georgiana is peculiar, we never try to persuade her into anything, it wouldn't do, you know."

"Well, I must say I'm rather glad than not. How much nicer to give you my arm than to see you dash off making the dust fly. But——" And the but, led to a tender pressure of the beautifully gloved hand, and the clasp to a blush, and the blush to words having little interest except for themselves.

In such good humour did Dan return that evening that before separating for the night he slapped his brother on the shoulder.

"On my word, old chap," he cried heartily, "you're getting along like a house on fire. And as Miss Arabella can't have me," he added, without the faintest notion of saying anything preposterous, "why, I've no doubt she'll think herself in luck's way to come off second best and take you."

CHAPTER XVI.

AT CROSS PURPOSES.

SAM WEEDON and Martha Rose were now playing a cross purposes. As not unseldom happens between tw ardent well-wishers they set themselves the task of rende ing each other happier without in the least realising a obstacle fatal to their scheme. Under a spell the pa now daily came into contact, they hardly knew how o why, daily fostering a delusion as fond as it was dangerou

The schoolmistress's wistful eyes, Sam's eager r ceptivity mutually beguiled. In Martha's dreamy al straction he saw only a longing for love and sympath in his own advances she recognised mere gratitude, natural turning to those who treated him with frien liness and respect.

So absorbed was Martha in thoughts of Clem th she never wondered why Sam Weedon now so pe petually crossed her path. Neighbours were not in th habit of paying each other calls unless for some speci purpose. If the farmer were minded to indulge in head and shoulders of cod or some Yarmouth bloate which was not often, he would as he expressed it ju step across the fields and order them; or if Master Ro had sent word that he wanted some faggots for heati the oven, Sam himself would look in and settle the litt

transaction. Once or twice between haysel and harvest, wheat and barley sowing, no more, would he sit down in the neat sanded kitchen, chatting about crops and the weather, market prices and the terribly bad times farmers were having and were likely to have, what with Bobby Peel and his confounded cornlaws, the anathema being immediately apologised for. Sam was no meetener* nor, although occasionally filling the post of churchwarden, did he attend worship at all regularly, and in blind Rose he respected the man as well as the preacher.

"We can't all be alike," he would observe to the old fish-salesman whenever such topics came up, which was not often.

"You're the wheat and such as I are the darnel; but I'm not a bad livin' chap and that is more than some can say for themselves."

Blind Rose never forced serious talk upon his visitor.

"Winnow not with every wind," was one of his favourite apothegms, a golden rule culled from the immortal allegorist, adding whenever he quoted it: "I'd liefer sell stinkin' fish than talk to fellow-creatures about their souls when they're harpin' on their bellies. 'One man holdeth his tongue because he hath not to answer, one man keepeth silence knowing his time.'"

At first Sam's visits were regarded as a mere piece of friendliness. He evidently bore Adah no malice and wished to have this understood. In such light, at least for some time, the trio regarded his conduct, after a little while taking quite other views.

* Meeting-house or chapel goer.

"The artful old chap," Adah confided to her friend Triffie, "he's sniffin' after me, I can see plain enough; but it's no sight o' use, Triff, I don't know what you think about it, but I wouldn't give a pin for a man I could turn round my little finger. One who knows his own mind, who can give as good as you send, he's the sort for me."

Master Rose's ponderings on the subject were of proud thankfulness. Not a hint did he breathe to anyone but his opinion was fixed. Sam Weedon's first visits had been made as an intercessor, he naturally wished Adah to be reinstated in her uncle's favour, and next he had come because he had found the habit of calling had grown upon him, he found it pleasant to wile away an hour in their company. Finally what had been a recreation became a necessity. The bachelor had evidently resolved to marry.

Tears would bedew the old man's cheeks as he contemplated the future; Martha—for he never doubted on whom Sam's choice had fallen—Martha married to a respectable farmer, the lot of both girls would be assured. Sam was perhaps an over-careful man, a skinflint, a nip-cheese folks called him, but he would never let a wife's sister want, and Martha's bettered position would perhaps sober Adah, make her more particular as to her companions; in fact, give her what she so sadly needed, a little proper pride. Adah in turn might marry a smal farmer or tradesman.

Pride and humility in almost equal proportion leavened the blind preacher's nature. An unprofitabl vessel he ever called himself, but neither he nor his ha ever been inside the dreaded house, and of his woma

kind none to his knowledge had ever, as the phrase went, "had a misfortune;" on both sides the women of the family being taken to church. As Sam Weedon's wife, Martha would raise not only herself but those belonging to her. Then he would wipe his eyes, upbraiding such aspirations, checking dreams perhaps destined to end in discomfiture.

Martha hardly thought at all of the farmer's assiduity. It seemed only natural that he should do his best to set her uncle's mind at ease, and for once and for all make him feel that Adah's folly was overlooked. Absorbed in her own misgivings she was in no mood to analyse the feelings of another. Whenever Sam overtook her on her way to Oxborrow and walked a few paces, chatting much more readily than had been his wont, she thus interpreted his conduct. She never suspected that he watched her movements, being ever on the look-out for a meeting.

One evening when Sam entered the cottage with a bag of bran over his shoulder, for he seldom came empty-handed, he stopped short.

"What's in the wind now? you look pert as a lark to-night, Martha!" he exclaimed, eyeing her curiously, his face brightening as he gazed.

"It's such a beautiful evening, Mr. Weedon, the roses smell so sweet and the thrushes yonder sing so sweetly, who can help feeling ready to jump for joy?" was the reply, Martha not so much as colouring at its childishness. Again the farmer gazed, his bag of bran still on his shoulder.

He noticed a quite new alertness about the neat little

figure, a look of exuberance in the usually sedate face, for the nonce the elder sister seemed to have caught the younger's spirit and expansiveness.

"Right she is, Master Rose," said Sam, now dropping the bran; "and pleasant it is for you a-sittin' here a-listenin' to the birds and havin' your mawther's chirpin's as well."

"We know when the voice of the turtle will be heard in the land, but for woman folk's tongues there is no season," was the old man's reply.

"Well, here's one who doesn't make too much noise at any time, I lay," Sam rejoined, casting a tender look at Martha.

Adah, after a hasty, "Night to you, Mr. Weedon," hurried away, she no longer ventured upon a wordy encounter with the farmer, and consequently his company lost charm.

"I've brought you a little bran, Master Rose," said the farmer. "No need to empty the bag now, Martha; I shall be passing this way to-morrow and will fetch it."

"I won't say no, Mr. Weedon; as the wise man saith, the liberal shall be made fat; but I'd liefer you took it out in mackerel or shrimps."

"There, there, don't make a piece o' work about a peck o' bran," replied the farmer. "I'm glad you've got another pig and he won't take it amiss of me leastways."

"No, indeed, there's no satisfyin' him; one would fancy that animal had set his mind upon winnin' a prize at a show. Four-footed creatures have their vanities like us poor sinners, Mr. Weedon, but they'll be

brought to no account. You'll take just a glass o' cowslip wine and a dollop* o' cake."

"Well, I can't say that I'm either hungry or dry, but they won't hurt me anyhow," Sam replied, accepting the refreshment because Martha would serve it, and because of the smile that would acknowledge his toast.

The collation and little ceremony over, the two men discussed one homely topic after another whilst Martha mechanically plied her needle.

Not a single word of what was said did she take in as she darned her uncle's nightcap, that odd tasseled tubular weft now fallen into disuse, but a most comfortable headgear in cold weather. A subdued smile lit up the face so clouded but a few hours before. Martha, indeed, was longing to be alone with her talisman, the pencilled scrawl so eagerly, almost despairingly looked for, and found at last. "My only dear, till death us shall part," had scrawled Clem, "meet me after tea tomorrow in the drift."

Pages could not have said or unsaid more. How foolish now seemed those jealous fears, how unjust to Clem her past mistrust! Till death us shall part! the words stayed, no voice made them vocal, but they rang in her ears all the same. It was as if Clem reiterated them, unseen, yet standing close by. The tiny missive in her pocket became a part of him, his presence could hardly be more so.

Quite unconscious of the caressing glances directed at her from time to time, Martha went on with her

* E. A., a small quantity.

work; the farmer envying alike darner and darns! I thought how good it was to be thus cared for, to ha his nightcap mended for love rather than money, wif affection and notableness ever at his side.

Equally unconscious was Martha of her uncle's fo dreams. Whenever he took up his stick saying: "Fe your bonnet and shawl, Martha; we'll keep Mr. Weec company part of the way," she obeyed with an alac that misled both men.

"It's pleasant abroad such evenings as this," she s as the trio set off.

"When we've someone to our minds to talk t was Sam's neat reply. "I don't know what you th on it, Master Rose, but I'd as lief have the comp of suckin' pigs as of folks whose tongues are alw awaggin'."

"I'm one with you there, neighbour, but the Say- of Prating Row stick to us like the old serpent hims it's not so easy to be rid on 'em."

"How you are up in the Scriptures, sure-ly, Ma Rose! I'm sure you could beat the parson to shiver you tried."

"No, no, Sam. I don't delude myself; if I've grace, his reverence has the book learnin', but you w think I'm takin' too much on myself if I just say t the Say-alls of Prating Row are not in the Bible, tho in a book that stands next to it. Peradventure yo heard tell of *The Pilgrim's Progress?*

"Bless you, yes, Master Rose; my mother was ever a-porin' over it, and when I was a little bor showin' me the gays. But lor! if I do take up a b

nowadays I'm a-noddin' afore I've got through half a page. Here's one who can spell, I lay."

Martha had started with a smile and the smile was on her lips still. What wonder when she turned towards Sam Weedon with a playful disclaimer that he misconstrued her gaiety? The old fish-salesman, too, how otherwise should he account for the sudden sprightliness of one ordinarily so retiring? Thus in the humblest as well as in the most exalted sphere human beings oftimes remain enigmas to each other; knit by closest ties, sharing the same board, they go through life veiled, lips opening but to lead astray!

CHAPTER XVII.

IN THE DRIFT.

THERE are English nooks and corners that seem especially beautified by each recurring season. The drift or wooded lane lying between Burridge and Oxborrow was one of these. Alike when Orion outshone the splendours of the heavens and when the Twins were setting, this spot had a loveliness of its own.

Exquisite on wintry days was the tracery of oak and elm, above all of ash, against a clear blue sky. Or hoar frost would work a wondrous transformation, no longer a veil of delicate lace-work being visible, from end to end the avenue scintillating with light, each many faceted crystal brilliant as a diamond star, each tiny point catching the sun.

The year here stamped its floral calendar, kept an unbroken chronicle of sweet smells, sounds and varied hues. In April thick beds of white and purple violets preceded the primrose and the cowslip, loves of cottage children, too plentiful, too remote to tempt others. Midsummer brought the wild rose, the skilfullest gardener could not so gracefully have draped every bit of hedge; then—can any decide which is the sweeter?—followed the "frolic honeysuckle," as a poet has aptly described it, and after that the travellers' joy, a joy, indeed, alike

to wise and simple; brilliant berries, scarlet, ruby and deep purple, crowning the season's display.

On this particular evening the spot seemed waiting for lovers' presence, anticipating human rapture. When with beating heart and kindled features Martha entered she felt vaguely conscious of welcoming fragrance, beauty and bird-singing. The place seemed to belong to her, to be her very own, part Eden, part sanctuary. And hardly had she set a dozen paces ere a nightingale broke forth into strains never before understood.

Yet she had not bounded forth joyously as of old to meet her lover. For the first time it was with mixed feelings that she approached the meeting-place. To-night eager looking forward and delighted assurance were tempered by undefined misgivings. She did not analyse her feelings, she only knew that there may be a rapture akin to pain.

On a sudden from behind a hedge Clem sprang forward, clasping her in his arms, kissing her a dozen times, apparently beside himself with relief and joy. Before she could utter a word he had crammed her pocket with sweetmeats and thrust a ring upon the third finger of her left hand.

"Not to wear, yet, you know, unless on a string round your neck; but we can see each other sometimes, Martha. I've put Dan on a false scent—oh! I've so much to tell you. Let us sit down on the bank. If we hear footsteps we can clamber over to the other side."

They seated themselves, Clem feeding her with pear drops whilst he went on volubly:—

"I must tell you then the best news you could hear, Dan is going to marry, which means that the sooner I take myself off, the better he'll be pleased. So I'm on the look-out for a nice little occupation, the farther from Oxborrow the better, and I've just heard of something Manningtree way that would just suit me, just suit us, I mean——" Here he paused to point his sentences with a kiss.

"The great thing now is for me to get there, and once out of Dan's reach, whether he has tied the knot himself or no, I can do as I like. But I shall say nothing about it, of course. Poor old Dan is such a pompous stuck-up fellow, that if he thought I was not going to follow his example and marry a boarding school Miss, I do believe he'd have a fit. But none of your fine ladies for me; although as I said just now I've put him off the scent nicely. He thinks that I'm after Miss Fenwick, that girl you saw me with the other day." And again Clem broke off, kissing Martha's burning cheeks and chuckling over his own cleverness.

"Oh, Mr. Clem," began Martha, putting away the sweetmeat he was about to pop into her mouth, "that is not right, you must not deceive anyone on my account, only harm can come of it."

"Now just you leave off fallala-ling and listen to me. Dan then being quite convinced that I'm making up to Miss Arabella, there is no sort of reason why you and I should not see each other now and then. So mind you are here the day after to-morrow about this time and—"

"No, Mr. Clem, no, Clem dear," she interrupted

pleadingly and now strangely agitated, "there is my place, there is his reverence to think of."

"You won't want your place when it wants you, I tell you. Mr. Paglar isn't back yet, and I don't suppose that the school will now be re-opened till after harvest. By that time if all turns out well you'll have something else in prospect, a nice home of your own, a gig to ride in and your own Clem to love you."

"I cannot be two-faced any longer, Clem," Martha persisted, trembling at his vehemence and at her own disturbance. She did not know how it was, each seemed so changed since their last meeting! For the first time she felt afraid of the devotion that had been her pride. "You may not get the kind of farm you want by Michaelmas," she went on, "and it is a long time till harvest. Mr. Paglar may send for me any day, I must do one thing or another, tell him all or give up meeting till we can do so openly——"

"Martha!"

As Clem now closed her mouth with kisses he also trembled before a new suddenly disclosed self. In the simplest, most honest frame of mind he had set out for this interview, but the joy of meeting after prolonged separation, the overwhelming sense of Martha's dependence upon him, above all, the betraying trouble of her eyes, voice and handclasp acted with intoxicating power. Like Martha he felt powerless, in the grip of feelings too strong for mastery, prey to wholly new and mysterious influences.

The hour was one of overpowering sweetness.

Except for the nightingale all was silent, its reiterated trills filling the place, the world, so completely did that

voice tremulous with passion subdue every other sound. It was a message to themselves, only a voice unlocking inmost thoughts, making vocal unacknowledged dreams.

As eloquent seemed motionless, inanimate things. The very zephyrs invited self-abandonment. A spray of sweet-briar almost touched Martha's cheek, its cherished fragrance to-night being unspeakably, insinuatingly, languorous. She brushed it away, a moment later reproving her own childishness, secretly asserting, reasserting faith in self and in her lover.

Meantime twilight had overtaken them, rendering indistinct every familiar object, intensifying the sense of solitude and aloofness from the world. It was as if they were nested here, when, if ever, to be torn away from a spot that seemed their very own, a part of their lives?

For supreme understanding had made them one. Come joy, come sorrow, the fulfilment of fondest hopes or life-long separation, by virtue of this hour they belonged to each other.

"Now, Martha," Clem continued masking his own agitation, "fill that silly little mouth with lollipops and leave off preaching as if for all the world you were your uncle in the meeting-house. You know as well as I do that all this fine talk of telling Mr. Paglar—I should like to see you doing that, Miss!—and of not meeting me any more is all fallala, twiddle-dum-dee and hoity-toity-tum. There, kiss me and say that I'm telling lies if you dare——"

"Dear Clem," Martha urged, now on the point of crying, "don't make a mocking stock of serious things. I love you, Clem, but I must do what is right——"

"Oh! I've got that much out of you at last, have I? although, of course, I knew it all the while. You're no hand at keeping a secret, Martha. Haven't I seen that you cared for me just a wee bit months ago? And I tell you over and over again, when Clem Fison takes a girl to church her name will be Martha Rose and none other. What now, am I not to have so much as a kiss?"

"It is growing late, I ought to be going home; do let me go home, Clem dear."

"Late? What a bobbery about nothing. Why the moon isn't up yet, and she's due before nine; besides if Master Rose is preaching at Tuddinghame he can't be back for another hour. And I haven't said half I've got to say yet."

"I'll come again another day then, perhaps the day after to-morrow. I'll drop a line into the pollard oak, only let me go now, Clem dear," sobbed Martha.

"That is all very well, but a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, you've heard that saying, I suppose?" Still affecting a jocular air, only pausing to kiss her eyes, lips and little dimpled chin, he went on: "Now just listen and obey your lord and master to be; the tables will be turned as soon as you trot about with my key-basket in your hand, I'll warrant. Can't you picture yourself, Martha? If not, I can, a consequential little body harrying your maid: Sukey, your master won't have this; Sukey your master is mighty particular about that——"

Martha had at first smiled through her tears, but a change in her lover's voice, an alteration of manner, once more evoked the pleading cry:—

"If you love me, Clem——"

But Clem cut short her utterance with a mocking:—

"If I love you, Martha, if, if——"

"Whist!" cried Martha, in a voice of alarm.

The nightingale was hushed now, but other sounds broke the stillness. The lower gate of the drift had opened and shut with a bang, and a man's heavy tread and low whistling were heard a furlong or so off.

"The deuce!" muttered Clem; "but come along."

In a twinkling he was on the other side of the bank with arms uplifted to aid her spring. Martha, however, skurried away, her light footfall soon out of hearing.

Once outside the drift she paused for a few minutes, letting the suppressed tears fall, but they were tears of thankfulness.

"Thank God, thank God for us both," she ejaculated half aloud.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PROFESSIONAL ROUNDS.

gentle knights pricking o'er the plain presented
r appearance than did the nameless doctor and
ague as they started on their rounds.
e and mortar, gallipots and Pharmacopœia
way, they briskly doffed the apothecary's apron
le an elaborate toilette; as they caracoled out
wn decoratively representing the healing art.
Cornelius mounted a roan cob, like his rider no
the heyday of youth, like his rider, too, a trifle
is, but of an appearance suggesting authority
sperous circumstances. His trot had the pro-
ring about it, no mistaking that solemn, mea-
ead, the doctor's horse proclaiming himself as
ior's charger. In one respect the advantage was
h the animal, for he possessed a right royal,
name. The long list of historic horses includes
voted to Æsculapian service; but Dr. Cornelius
ader of history, his good beast answered to the
Belisarius.
st as befitted seniority and experience Dr. Cor-
id Belisarius moved with immense staidness and
, Mr. Fenwick appropriately sat a skittish young
ed Don Juan. Perhaps Don Juan's excessive

friskiness and juvenility were somewhat artificial, his curvetings, impatient pawings and giddy behaviour generally might be attributable to art rather than nature. Anyhow he passed for what he seemed, and greatly to his owner's delight had obtained a dangerous reputation for restiveness. Market women with their donkey-carts would scuttle out of the way as at the approach of a runaway; urchins bidden to hold him during a halt at cottage or farm-house would tremble in their shoes; and when Don Juan was put to a canter, or, worse still, a gallop, folks rushed out asking each other for whom the bell would be tolled next. To create an excitement of this kind delighted Fen amazingly, whilst his fellow contented himself with more dignified homage, the bobbing of grandames and school children, the clutched forelock of old men, the confidence of all.

The two medical assistants generally sallied forth together, when fairly outside the town taking divergent roads. To-day both had to see patients at Burridge, and, their business not being particularly urgent, at a walking pace enjoyed the hour and a confidential chat.

It was a sweet morning and although only level fields lay on either side of the road the eye needed no more. As the pair rode between lofty hedges and flowery banks glittering with dew they overlooked sweeps of purple clover, deep green wheat and brown fallow, all making great blotches of colour under the blue heavens.

On the fallow husbandmen were busy with drill-harrows or rollers, each team a chief feature and crowning-point of the landscape. With their fine glossy terra-cotta coloured coats, flaxen manes and tails elaborately braided, these magnificent creatures are the ploughman's

chief care and pride; their darlings also with compound interest repaying the fondness bestowed upon them.

The air was of wondrous briskness and purity, a breeze blowing from the desert or ocean could not be more exhilarating.

"Have you seen our farming friends lately?" somewhat pompously asked Dr. Cornelius.

"Not I," was the huffish reply, as he spoke Fen's countenance taking quite a fierce expression. "The fact is, Cornelius, I consider that Dan has behaved rather shabbily to my sister, whilst as to the country bumpkin, his brother, if I were to meet him on the road this morning I should feel inclined to give him a good horse-whipping."

The elder man eyed his slight town-bred companion smilingly.

"Come, come, Fenwick, don't try that game on young Fison; why, he can carry a coomb of corn on his back as if it were a feather, and would have you sprawling on the ground before you knew where you were. But what is this to-do about? Have both brothers been playing the fair Arabella false?"

"My sister doesn't want them and I'm sure I don't," Fen continued; "but I must say Dan at one time paid a good deal of attention to Arabella, and now I hear that Mrs. Cribb has made up a match between him and Selina Atwell, a girl with nothing to say for herself, as empty-headed a piece of goods as you could find in all Ipswich."

"My dear fellow, think of her pocket not of her head, the very notion makes my own mouth water."

"Much she will get to fill her pocket whilst that old harridan——"

"Now, Fen, you know my objection to vulgarity."

"Whilst the old lady lives then, and she's good for ninety if a day."

"Three figures are not at all unlikely in her case. Look at my patient, Mrs. Bray," continued Dr. Cornelius, with the air of a veteran leech, "ninety-three last birthday and sound as a prize pippin."

"I hope old Mother Cribb——"

"For heaven's sake, Fen, spare my nerves."

"The old lady, then, may last as long, that's all I can say; but that a young lout, a lubber, a greenhorn——"

"Now, Fen, I do abhor strong language, just speak as if, at least, you had been to a dame school."

"That a clodhopper like Clem should dangle after Arabella without meaning anything is more than any gentleman can stand. The sneak shall pay for it, I can tell him."

"You don't surely contemplate a breach of marriage?" asked Cornelius, still inclined to treat the matter with levity.

"I only wish I had enough ground to go upon, I wouldn't hesitate a second. But before the week is out I mean to know what the fellow means."

"Why not drop a gentle hint to your friend Dan? As he is out of the innings there could be no harm in that, but don't set to work in a hectoring bullying spirit. Think of our profession——"

"Our profession be——"

Dr. Cornelius's ears were spared the expletive, just

then a shabby gig appeared in sight, and motioning his companion to do the same, the elder man put Belisarius to a canter. With nods and waves of the hand suggesting professional urgency the pair dashed by, soon however slackening their pace.

"I always get out of Farmer Gooding's way if I can," explained Cornelius; "he's as deaf as a post, and though I've told him what to call me dozens of times he's always out with Mr. —— Mr. —— as if that wretched name of mine were something to be proud of. I should like to give that fellow a shaking who wrote—'What's in a name,' etcetera. Everything is in a name, and thrice happy are the Smiths, Browns, Thomsons and Robinsons if they only knew it! A Smith is sent to jail for sheep stealing, a Brown to Botany Bay for forgery, a Robinson or Thomson is hanged for murder. What on earth does it matter to the other Smiths, Browns, Thomsons and Robinsons, since every other man or woman is so called? I assure you, Fen, that but for my accursed name I should have settled in life long ago. Think of making a nice, genteel girl Mrs. ——! Pah, it makes me sick to think of it."

"I say, Cornelius, why not make up to that elderly heiress Mrs. Cribb, and take her name? Dr. Cornelius Cribb would sound uncommonly well; and what a pill for Dan! Never mind the difference of age——"

"You know how distasteful such joking is to me," was the other's subacid reply, "but one might as well talk to a door-post. Well, here is the turnpike so good day to you."

Just as the bare mention of knight-errantry transformed the courtly hidalgo of La Mancha into a bully-

ing braggadocio, so the elderly medical assistant became peevish and unsociable by any liberties taken with his name. Fortunately at the toll-bar the pair took different roads, Fen being bound for Burridge, his comrade for a group of cottages in the adjoining village.

Just as a cadet or midshipman when at home will affect the knowingness of a Wellington and a Nelson, so over pulse feeling, tongue inspecting and the like Cornelius put on the gravity and authoritativeness of an Abernethy. His patients, one and all, moreover, adored him, such a gentleman to ransack your constitution, they would say; he'd ferret out the mischief if they couldn't themselves say whether it was gripes or rheumatics that terrified; and that well-spoken and feelin', not for puttin' off poor folks was he, but always ready to hear all they had to say, no matter how long it might take to relate.

Dr. Cornelius was also in high favour with village imps, his pockets ever containing comfits and sugar-plums which he delighted to rattle in their ears, tantalisingly delaying a dole till on the point of departure.

Little wonder then that as he tied Belisarius to a cottage gate his face re-assumed its professional expression, the annoyance of the moment before was forgotten; beamingly he greeted a dame of ancient days gathering pot-herbs.

"Good day to you, Mrs. Pooley," he said, "as I was passing I thought I would look in."

"Like Dr. Cornelius to a T! as I'm for ever a-sayin' poor folks and the quality, it's all one to you, it's their insides you think on."

"Well, of what good should I be otherwise? Th-

physician's concern is not with his patients' material circumstances but with their bodily condition."

Dr. Cornelius made a point of expressing himself neatly to humble clients, always avoiding colloquialisms and native accent.

"In course, in course, sir, but come inside. I did want to see you, I did."

"Your leg troubling you again? I am sorry to hear that, we must change the treatment that is all."

Having ushered her visitor into her clean sanded kitchen and placed a Windsor chair, Mrs. Pooley closed the door.

"No, no, Dr. Cornelius, it isn't my leg, though it's brazen enough for anything, and as I'm allus a-preachin' to it: 'No more o' your nonsense or you'll repent it,' true as I sit here. But how I can look you in the face I don't know, for if I must tell the truth, I've been a-nannickin' with my liver."

As befitted the occasion Dr. Cornelius put on a look of excessive gravity.

"I presume, Mrs. Pooley, that you have had recourse to one of those good-for-nothing people called Quacks?"

"There's no denying it, Dr. Cornelius; my son's wife was at Bury fair a week ago come Saturday, and one o' those mountebank chaps was a-curin' folks of their rheumatics, bad legs and other ailments as they stood. Rebecca says, and will hold to it as long as she's a tongue in her head, says she, that folks bent double all on a sudden walked as upright as crows in the rain, so bein' a feelin' woman she bought me a couple of plaisters to put on my loins, and they'd been that tetchy I clapped

one on when I went to bed; but true as I sit here, Dr. Cornelius, afore five minutes by the clock I felt as if my inside was takin' fire, so off I pulled the plaister almost flayin' myself and t'other I put in the cinder hod."

"Well, I hope you will profit by the lesson, for otherwise you will have to dispense with my services——"

"Lawk's a mussy me, Dr. Cornelius, don't talk like that! you make me ready to sink into the earth, I've been doctored off and on all my days, but you're the first to master my constitution, which is that obstinate a donkey is naught to it. And I didn't encourage the mountebank, it was Rebecca."

"Then you must be so good as to refuse your daughter-in-law's fairings for the future. Quackery, my good woman, is a canker-worm."

"The plaster wouldn't give me one?" asked Mrs. Pooley greatly alarmed. "I do feel such gnawins and pinches."

"You shall have an emollient that will set matters right this time, but let this foolish business be a warning. Quackery is a canker-worm preying upon society; a pestilence——"

"Lor, Dr. Cornelius, don't go for to say that I've run my head into plague, pestilence——" "and famine," was on the speaker's lips. She checked herself in time, adding, "or such like?"

The doctor waved his hand impatiently.

"Mrs. Pooley, allow me to proceed, first assuring you that I will arrest any incipient mischief resulting from your imprudence. As I was observing quackery is a pestilence blighting the harvests of science. Pretty encouragemen

to us doctors, this! Our prescriptions thrown aside for nostrums of the first imposter lighted upon——"

"No, Dr. Cornelius, I haven't treated you that disdainful neither, I've used your ointment reglar' all the same," interrupted Mrs. Pooley, now fairly overcome and freely applying an apron corner to her eyes.

"Now you know well enough that I'm the very last man to bear malice, Mrs. Pooley. But just exercise your wits for a moment. How would a cup of tea taste if to one spoonful of tea you popped two of, say, mustard or tobacco into your pot? The effect of heterogeneous potions, some of them noxious in the extreme, upon the system is even more disastrous. Let me, however, finish what I had to say. Quackery, then, is precisely the same as false coinage, the foisting of bad money upon folks instead of good, and if we had a Government worth twopence, quacks would be sent to the gallows as false coiners were served during the last reign."

Having delivered himself of this homily Dr. Cornelius proceeded to feel his patient's pulse, examine her tongue, sound her lungs and the task got through with due deliberation and solemnity. Then, cheering Mrs. Pooley with a parting word, bestowing a penny on the urchin looking to Belisarius and a handful of comfits to more youthful beholders, he cantered away.

CHAPTER XIX.

MR. BY-ENDS AND PLIABLE.

"THE fear of a man bringeth a snare," is perhaps as wise a one as any of Solomon's three thousand proverbs. To work by the sap like a miner is ever the coward's way, most often finding himself in worse plight than had he kept the rough road overhead, buffeted may be by rude blasts, but cheered by the clear light of heaven.

Next market day Clem returned alone, Dan having stayed behind to tea with the Atwells.

Martha's lover was in high good humour with himself, with his sweetheart and with the world. Upright at heart, he loved the little schoolmistress all the better for her womanly pride and decorum and had written in quite repentant strain. She must forgive him for having so far forgotten himself, he said, but he was overjoyed at seeing her once more, and at the time hardly knew whether he stood on his head or his heels. Then—she must have detected it?—the miller had made him take a beaker of grog just before, and the hot gin and water had got into his head. He would write again soon, and appoint a meeting, the *billet doux* ending with the usual, "My only dear till death us shall part."

Tea over, whistling as he went, Clem made the customary round. Having locked up barn, granary, pigstyes, and fowl-house, taken a last look at horses and cattle, he re-entered the keeping-room, still in airiest

mood. A little packet lay on the bureau, as the farmer's writing cabinet was called hereabouts, and handling it with gingerly touch the young man unfolded several wraps of rose-coloured tissue-paper, finally taking out what looked like a bell of silver filigree. Beauties of that period never went to balls without one of these toys, a bouquet-holder, as it was called, of silver or better still of silver gilt which, filled with flowers, was worn at the waist.

There was something peculiar about Clem's physiognomy and attitude as he surveyed his purchase, now with self-congratulatory looks, now with just an expression of inward reproach. He placed it conspicuously on the centre table, then let it lie as if accidentally deposited there on the chimney-piece, all the while with an air of alternating assurance and hesitation. No lover-like ardour lit up his face, yet he eyed the pretty trifle almost fondly. When at last gig-wheels were heard close by he boldly adhered to his first determination, arabesques and spirals now glittered against a rose-coloured background.

The days were at their longest and most luminous, many country folks going to bed without a chamber lantern. Although just upon eight o'clock it was broad daylight when Dan stalked into the keeping-room. The elder brother's nature was but too well betrayed by that measured, resounding tread.

So absorbed was Clem in his gift and its probable effect that he did not notice the other's dumpish looks. For a moment Dan's features relaxed. He naturally supposed that the offering was intended for Selina, tribute of prospective brother-in-law.

"What do you think of this, old chap?" asked Clem, affecting nonchalance; "just the gimcrack for Miss Arabella's birthday, eh?"

He stopped short disconcerted, dumfounded by Dan's attitude. Throwing down the bouquet-holder, glowering upon him as he spoke, Dan broke forth:—

"What ass-ish, confounded tomfoolery must you be at now? Arabella's birthday indeed! But look you here, Clem, Fen is not going to stand any more nonsense about his sister, she's not to be taken up and thrown aside like a cast-off glove, he says. He will have it out with you and quite right too."

Clem turned all colours, his tongue cleaving to the roof of his mouth. The worst of these encounters was that Dan ever seemed to have the best of it. From the beginning the two brothers had represented the Mr. By-Ends and Pliables of the world; Dan's conduct invariably commending itself to society and everyday standards; Clem turning away from higher views and purposes.

"Fool that I was to introduce you to my friends at all," fumed Dan. "But how was I to suppose that you would run after a girl like mad and then try to sneak out of it?"

"I'd never any intentions," got out poor Clem.

"You did your best to make Arabella think so, Fen says, and he ought to know. What opened his eyes was that when she told you the other day her visit to Ipswich was coming to an end you coolly changed the subject."

"Sure as I stand here, Dan, I have never compromised myself. Whenever the young ladies took tea with us and we saw them home you paired off with Selina; was the same thing at the flowershow, the regatta an

when we all went to Harwich. How I could help walking and talking with Arabella, I should very much like to know?" Indignation was giving Clem courage.

"What earthly business had you with her birthday unless you intended to behave like a gentleman? But it's not too late——"

"Good Lord, Dan, how you talk! A pretty position I'm in to think of taking a wife. And a fine lady, too! I'd rather be excused, thank you."

"It's not my excuses you want but Fen's; and I tell you, you've got yourself into a deuce of a mess, and the best thing you can do is to get out of it in the only decent way. A fine lady! Fiddlesticks. Miss Fenwick is a genteelly brought up girl without any airs and graces. You couldn't possibly do better."

"That is my own look-out," was the defiant reply.

"Look you here, Clem; do you really mean to sneak out of this business?"

"I'm not going to be bullied into marrying a girl I don't care twopence for, and so I tell you. If that young spark at Ipswich thinks I've behaved shabbily to his sister, let him go to law; I'll pay the damages with all the pleasure alive."

"You mayn't mind being made a laughing-stock, but it's not to my taste, and we run in harness, that's the worst of it," Dan stormed.

"I tell you over and over again, Dan, it's a plot, a bare-faced plot. For all her innocent ways that boarding-school miss is as deep as——is an artful one, and moreover she's not to my mind, and when I do marry it will be to please myself, not you or anybody else."

Clem's emphasis was a betrayal. Dan eyed his brother with a new expression.

"Humph!" he exclaimed, "I suppose you intend to follow Jack Cooper's example and marry some pot-house minx, or like that fool Charlie Simpson go to church with a girl no better than she should be?"

"I never meddle or make with your affairs and you'd best leave mine alone, that's the long and the short of it."

And so saying Clem made for the door, but Dan hastily rising blocked the way.

The brothers confronted each other; Clem making secret vows to keep his own counsel, Dan being equally determined to unriddle such unwonted bravado and self-assertion. Never before had he seen his junior in so defiant a mood. The attitude seemed of itself a confession.

"It's very hard," Dan continued, "that whilst I am doing my very best to improve our position and get a rise in the world, I have no help, only hindrance from you. You were always ready to hugger-mugger with ploughboys when we went to the Ipswich Grammar School, and I should never be surprised to hear that you had ruined your prospects by a low marriage."

Had Dan any inkling of those stolen interviews with Martha, Clem wondered? The rasping speech stung like a whip but was borne in silence.

"And if you are jilting Fen's sister because you've taken up with a trollop or are courting a dairy-maid the sooner I know of it the better, and the sooner we part company the better. Can't you for once be straightforward with your own brother?"

For a moment, for a moment only, Martha's name was on Clem's lips, the other's unseemly taunt all but goading him into avowal and manly defiance. But Dan's masterfulness, terror of the consequences and a habit of subordination prevailed.

"Time enough for me to tell you what I'm going to do when I know myself," he said in almost a submissive voice. "And," he added, feeling that he must at any risk shelter himself and cloak his real intentions, "what in the world is Fenwick in such a hurry to marry his sister for? Arabella told me she should return to her aunt for the winter; I shall see her again." Then cowering under Dan's scrutiny he managed to get out:—"I may change my mind, you know."

Had the poltroon shift answered its purpose? Were Dan's suspicions set at rest? Clem could not feel sure, he only knew that a terrible moment was averted and that he again breathed freely. Without another word Dan let him pass, and when they next met it was to talk of everyday matters.

Not, however, with everyday ease! There is a bitter sentence in Tacitus, perhaps as bitter as any ever penned —"They hated with the hatred of brothers." On this evening had been sown the seeds of such passion. Henceforth, deep-seated antagonism would separate the two. A spirit of domination on the one hand, resentment unable to cope with it on the other, had engendered a feeling akin to hate.

CHAPTER XX.

A REVELATION.

NOT more uniform were planetary movements the rise and set of constellations than the farmers' ing and gathering-in. Soil as well as starry heavens its periods, epochs fixed by usage and tradition.

There was the quadrennial or four course rot to begin with, mangel-wurzel and turnips being foll by barley and clover; on the third year horse-beans pease replacing these; all three crops being but a paration for the crowning product, the truly golde that time the wealth-bringing, wheat.

The great business of wheat-sowing began when mists enveloped the fallow and Orion might be rising majestically in the east. By the time Arc reappeared folks were sowing barley, next to whea most important crop of the year, and when Pegasu turned from his yearly journey thistle-spudding turnip-hoeing employed alike young and old.

Time in country places was marked by such cesses. So-and-so died last wheat-sowing, this or happened at haysel, hay-harvest and so on, neighl would say, hardly needing an almanac.

If good seasons and the assurance of ten coom wheat to an acre did not render these stolid fa

jovial or even make their faces shine it imparted quiet satisfaction.

Summer was now well advanced and harvest prospects were excellent. Even a three-horse farmer like Sam set out briskly for market and had a joke for his labourers on Saturday night.

Something else, something with which material interests had nothing to do had made another man of him, he now moved, talked, jested with quite youthful buoyancy and looking forward.

"Lawks-a-daisy, Sam," observed his cousin, like himself a farmer in a small way, and, unlike himself, a bit of a wag. "Lawks-a-daisy, Sam, you look that perky one would think you were goin' a-courtin'."

"Anyhow I'm not dead and buried yet, thank God, Josiah," was Sam's enigmatical retort.

Mr. Josiah Weedon, father of a young family and, so folks said, wedded to a termagant, eyed his relation meaningly.

"Think twice afore you change your sulky for a gig, Sam, that's all I can say."

This little conversation took place outside the Corn Exchange one market day, and others also noticed Sam's improved personal appearance and jaunty behaviour. New frock-coat, at that time called a surtout, silk hat, shepherd's plaid waistcoat and new mandarin silk pocket-handkerchief conferred a startlingly prosperous look. Some held with Josiah that he was about to marry, perhaps a widow with money, others that he had come into a legacy.

A day or two after that twitting on the market-place Sam tidied himself and set out for a walk. His thin,

uncomely weather-worn face beamed as he turned footsteps towards Burridge, whither with delight thrilling purpose he hardly knew. One thing he k and one only, he was longing for a few minutes Martha alone.

Those few minutes, who could say, might be his very night. He had struck across the fields, and evening being one of great softness and beauty lingered from time to time. Drinking in sweet si smells and sounds, hardly knowing that he did so, scious of vague, but passionate joy and nothing else made slow way, at length turning into the drift, wooded lane with oak and elm "high overarched, bowered."

The sun had long been aslope, and shafts of rich gold shot through the dense leafage, myriad winged creatures made the warm air murmurous, birds piped love songs amid the hedges.

Sam paused, for on one side of the lane a bean in full blow gave delicious fragrance. Again and a he sniffed the familiar scent, each deep-drawn br bringing intoxication, steeping his senses in romance dreamland.

On a sudden he started, listening intently. A rather a moan, recalled him to actualities, his thought being of some animal in pain. Traps and for foxes and other four-footed marauders were set h abouts. Had some stray dog been caught by on those murderous engines? Sam was a humane r but for foxes, badgers, moles and the like he had s pity. The term murderous he only applied to m

best friends and servants, the faithful yard or sheep dog.

Peering hither and thither he descried on the other side of the bank, somewhat lower down, a woman's figure on the ground, rather, bent double she looked, as if suddenly felled to the earth by grief or pain, sobs following the first loud cry. The hedge was here broken a little, sufficient space admitting of wary climber. But the bank was high and steep, and Sam at once concluded that in making her spring the girl had fallen, breaking or dislocating a limb.

In a second he was at her side, the sight of a well-known bonnet and shawl evoking a cry well-nigh as agonised as her own.

"Martha Rose and no other! Dear heart alive!—what is the matter?" he exclaimed. Then bending over her in tenderest wise, gently supporting her with one arm, he continued: "Let me ease you up a bit, my dear. There, that's better, maybe it's only a sprain."

But Martha only sobbed and shook her head.

"Where is the pain?" asked Sam solicitously. "If you've hurt yourself that serious you can't get home a-foot. I'll have a hurdle and mattress, aye and another to help me in a jiffy."

Martha vainly tried to collect herself. Again heart-broken sobs made the water stand in Sam's eyes. Hard indeed it were to say who looked the more stricken of the two, Martha or her humble, hitherto-silent lover.

Sam Weedon was a very simple soul and as he

thus watched the weeping, agonised girl only one explanation occurred to him. Martha Rose was as modest and well-conducted a young woman as you would find if you rode a black horse white, not for a second did he accuse her of light-mindedness; but she had surely been entrapped, some loose designing fellow had devilishly wrought her ruin! She now bewailed her lost character, a future overshadowed with shame!

With lightning-like rapidity one expression after another changed the farmer's face. First of all came a look of almost murderous hate. Martha's betrayer was in his mind, then; next followed a cloud of despondency, where was comfort to be found for either of them? his white contracted features said. Lastly a sudden gleam lighted up his eyes, with a glance of ineffable gentleness and pity again he bent down.

"Put away your handkercher, Martha," he said in low, loverlike tones, "things are not so bad as all that neither, and if some good-for-nothing chap has been circumventin' you, here's one ready to make an honest woman of you to-morrow."

Martha started to her feet, indignation and womanly pride getting the better of grief. Sam's chivalrous speech seemed the deadliest affront.

"Thank God, Mr. Weedon, I'm not what you take me to be; if I have been deceived, I've nothing to blush for, and you're the last person I should have expected to impinge my modesty."

"That's a cuttin' speech, Martha, and I don't deserve it," Sam said, ready to weep himself. "But you're no one o' the to-do-ing, blubberin' sort, and what else should I think you to be a-cryin' your eyes out he

for, and," he added very meekly, "if I meant to say I'd take you to church to-morrow was there any bad meanin' in that?"

"Don't mind me, don't mind what I say, Mr. Weedon," Martha replied, now recovering herself. "I've been a little upset, that's all, and I'm sorry if I've hurt your feelins."

"You know your sore and I mine, Martha." Then seeing that she turned to go, he continued: "Least ways I'll bear you company, I was goin' to your uncle's and we'll talk about the buds,* the beans in blow and such like; a sight deal better for you than mopin' along all by yourself."

"No, no, Mr. Weedon, I'm much beholden to you, but Adah will see that I've been cryin'. Do you take the meadows and I'll go round by the turnpike road."

"Good evening to you, then, Martha." He held out his hand. "Don't dwell on what I said just now; you haven't a truer well-wisher than this here one," he said, eyeing her wistfully, "or one who sets more store by you." The rough brown hand was shaken but without responsive warmth.

"Good night and thank you kindly, Mr. Weedon; don't say anything about me at home," was Martha's matter-of-fact reply.

Never turning her head she hurried down the lane, Sam watching the little straw bonnet and checked shawl till both were out of sight.

Still he waited, lost in thought, his mental capacities

* E. A., young stock.

strained to the utmost. This riddle should be read if his name was Samuel Weedon, and having thus made up his mind he turned over one likelihood after another. A long catalogue of names was reviewed, each dismissed with the contemptuous thought: "Trust Martha Rose for letting herself down by walking with a chap like that." Then still at his wit's end, with dark looks and dragging steps he turned homewards. He had no spirit for the visit so fondly anticipated a quarter of an hour before.

"Mussy me, Mr. Weedon, how you do make one jump sure-ly!" was Mrs. Amos's greeting, as he re-entered the house. "Why you said you were a-goin' to Master Rose's!"

"I didn't kiss the book on it that I know on," Sam rejoined tetchily. "And what's that bor of yours up to now, no faggots brought in and to-morrow baking day?"

"Jimmy, you limb of mischief," called out his fond mother, "just leave off playin' marbles, and see to them faggots, or you'll get the length of my tongue, I'll warrant."

Meantime Martha trudged along the high road, inwardly recapitulating Clem's sentences. Every cruel word she had now by heart, and crueller seemed each as she conned it over. The misspelt note in her pocket was what Pliable would have penned had love rather than salvation tempted him from the beaten track.

He should always wish her well, the young farmer wrote, but his eyes were opened at last. As she had said over and over again, it was better for both that

they should part. If only he had listened to her before!

After much humming and ha'ing he spoke of his prospects. He was far from being his own master; to marry against Dan's wishes would mean ruin. She would forgive him he felt sure, for he felt that wretched he could hang himself. And so on and so on ran the letter, Pliable's story told over again, the moral lapse of one "so base as to have given out for a few difficulties."

CHAPTER XXI.

IN THE TURNIP-FIELD.

ALONGSIDE sweeps of wheat now reddening for the sickle, aud of barley, its chrysolite hues not as yet turned to silveriness, now glowed the rich green, sweet-scented turnip. Few crops are more beautiful or more exhilarating than this, no matter how sultry the hour all is cool, dewy freshness in the turnip-field, and hardly more pictorial is a French vintage than the spectacle of hoers at work.

The husbandman's business resembles the preacher's, he must be perpetually and indefatigably warring with the enemy, ever at work cleaning the soil, eradicating evil growths.

In May and June the wheat-field is taken in hand, an army of weeders will attack darnel and thistle. And after weeding and thistle-spudding comes turnip-hoeing, pleasant work on the whole and taking place at a pleasant season.

Two days after the encounter with Martha, Sam set off for his turnip-field, hoe on shoulder. He always managed to get a pretty good crop of turnips and no little credit for the same.

So little indeed did poor Sam otherwise accomplish that the neighbours made a point of extolling his one

achievement. It was indeed a joke among them, but a joke that the simple-minded farmer did not resent. So long as personal appearance, parsimonious habits and supposed matrimonial projects were left alone, folks might jeer as they pleased about his farming. To-day he brooded, evidently in the grip of an idea that held him tight. From time to time low angry mutterings dropped from his lips. Even the favourite job of turnip-hoeing brought no relief. The weather was perfect; far away stock-doves made continuous music; a light breeze freshened the deep green crop bringing out delicate penetrating perfume. As ankle deep in the thick glossy leafage Sam hoed away, instead of relaxing his features sharpened, his complexion took the grey hue of compressed indignation and secret despair. How could he discover Martha's poltroon lover? he asked himself, and with that question another, What good was turnip-hoeing or anything else? Again he tried to light upon a clue, reviewing the village swains one by one. But Martha Rose had never kept company, as the phrase went, with any. Whilst Adah counted a dozen strings to her bow it was well known that Martha persistently kept courters at a distance. Nor, that the neighbours had inkling of, did she possess acquaintances at a distance. Here as in most country places everyone knew everyone's business, and Sam's long and painful deliberation left him precisely where he had begun.

Time acknowledges not the drag of a heavy heart. The sun was now high, and taking out his heavy watch Sam found to his surprise that it wanted half-an-hour only to his twelve o'clock dinner. He had just time for a call at the mill.

Shouldering his hoe he passed into the turnpike road.

"Day, Mr. Weedon!" said a voice familiar yet strange. Clem it was who spoke, but a Clem so changed that the other stared in astonishment.

Not less downcast than Sam himself looked the young farmer to-day, in his case despondency being allied to shamefacedness, the hang-dog look of one on the worst possible terms with himself.

"Mornin', Mr. Clem, you've got a bad headache, I lay? Why you're just the colour o' your shirt."

Clem was a general favourite among his neighbours. "He isn't haughty like his brother," folks were accustomed to say. "Dan is that stuck-up you'd think he belonged to the quality, but Clem is hail-fellow-well-met with all of us, no nonsense about him."

Sam had an especial liking for the younger Fison. Himself nothing of a shot, many and many a time he had begged Clem's good offices. Delighted to be of use, also to exhibit his prowess, Clem had brought down hawks and kites for him, trapped foxes and weasles and otherwise cleared Sam's premises of four-footed marauders. More than once he had doctored a sick horse or cow, these and other good turns winning Sam's heart. Whilst Dan was stiff and off-hand to all but his own genteel little circle Clem ever remained neighbourly.

With real concern Sam now reiterated his inquiry.

"Maybe you've been eatin' too many green apples and are a bit griped?" he added.

"I'm all right," was the curt reply, "thank ye, but the sun has been beating down on my head; it's confounded hot to-day."

Sam perused his companion curiously. Something

was amiss here, what could it be? Then he remembered certain rumours that had come to his ears. Saranne, Mrs. Amos and Mrs. Frost the butterwoman would whisper of differences between the brothers, poor Mr. Clem, as they called him, always kept under. For everyone in the neighbourhood knew that Dan had an overbearing nature, no need of gossip to tell folks so much. Sam was bound to Oxborrow, Clem homeward, he could not therefore shake off his company.

"But it is beautiful weather, and if it lasts we shall all be cutting corn before the week is out," Sam rejoined. Then, for whilst he was the kindest-hearted soul in the world, he was the least discreet, he plunged into a delicate subject. "So Mr. Dan is goin' to be married, is goin' a-courtin' leastways?" he asked, curiosity getting the better of good manners. He never for a moment doubted that he had hit upon the cause of Clem's glum looks.

"Lor! Mr. Weedon, talk of something else, do; I'm tired of hearing that dinned into my ears from morning till night," Clem answered with temper.

"Well, it's only what you might expect, Mr. Dan marryin' I mean; and if I was in your place, Mr. Clem, I should do the same," Sam went on, intent upon soothing his companion's ruffled spirits. "What's to hinder? And time flies, don't wait like me till it is too late."

"Run on as you like," Clem said, still snappish, "it all goes in at one ear and out at the other."

"I hope you'll take naught amiss from me, you know I wish you well," Sam continued tactlessly, taking himself for a comforter. "But as I was a-sayin' just now, if I had my time over again I should take the first

nice young woman who'd have me. When a chap begins courtin' on the wrong side of fifty he only makes a mockin' stock of himself."

Instead of cheering the other Sam but saddened himself, the speech recalled Adah's prank and yesterday's fond dreams.

"There, there, Mr. Weedon, don't take to preaching, I'm not in the marrying mind. And afore I forget it——"

Just then the road suddenly curved and the pair found themselves face to face with Martha.

As a rule in summer-time blind Rose fetched fish from Ipswich early, returning home between eight and nine o'clock; and Martha was no gad-about, seldom to be seen on the turnpike road except when leading her uncle. The encounter startled both men. So passionate had become Sam's interest in Martha's secret, so thoroughly had the desire to unravel it taken possession of him, that his faculties were thereby sharpened. With the rapidity of a really sharp intellect he now drew the supreme inference.

Clem's suddenly checked utterance, his changing colour and furtive glance at Martha, a glance of mingled humiliation, love and appeal, told half the story, Martha's behaviour revealed the rest.

The blind salesman always carried his basket of fish himself, the left hand being given to his leader. That left hand was now dropped with a jerk, Martha suppressing a little cry, then having her eyes on the ground she would have hurried on, but uncle Jethro halted.

"Day to you, Mr. Weedon and Mr. Clem, and both

of you that handy one would think you'd come on purpose. I've to fetch a head and shoulders of cod for her ladyship to-morrow, might either of you be wantin' a good tight slice?"

"I thank you kindly, Master Rose," Sam was the first to reply, "but we're just a-puttin' down a pig and we're not yet through the haste."*

"Shall I leave a couple of pounds at your house, Mr. Clem?" asked blind Rose; "Mr. Dan is partial to cod."

Clem did not observe Sam Weedon's fixed inquisitorial look or his answer would have been slower, still more hesitating. He choked, he stammered, he cleared his throat, finally getting out a rambling: "I can't say, you see I don't know what we've got in the pantry."

"Which means that I'm not to leave the cod then, Mr. Clem?"

The fish-salesman was unaccountably deliberate this morning, again and again Martha had made a forward movement, and Clem tried to slip by, but the old man would be heard.

"You'll excuse me, but it isn't every day I can give you such a chance, and as I was mentionin' just now, Mr. Dan is uncommonly partial to cod."

"Then just leave a couple of pounds," Clem rejoined, his powers of self-control being at an end.

As to Martha, after that feebly murmured "Mornin' to you, Mr. Weedon," she remained with eyes fixed on the ground, vainly repressed tears coursing down her flushed cheeks. Never once had she so much as glanced

* Pig's fry or tripe.

at Clem, whose eyes were also moist, shame rendering doubly bitter his sorrow. The blind man could not see their agitation and juste now was too much absorbed in his cod to notice Martha's restlessness or Clem's disconcerted manner. But nothing was missed by the one looker-on. Greatly troubled at his discovery, for Sam's suspicions had now become assurance, he noted every look and gesture of the pair.

"I was looking for you last night, Mr. Weedon," the blind man said, at last setting forward. "I'd thank you for a shilling's worth of horse muck for my pumpkin beds."

"Never fear, Master Rose, Jimmy shall bring it to-morrow and I'll look in afore long."

The group now broke up. With the slow, uniform pace of the led the fish-salesman continued his walk, Martha surreptitiously wiping away her tears.

"Mr. Clem was middlin' short this mornin'; I can't make him out," observed her companion.

"Oh," Martha replied impatiently, "he was in a hurry, couldn't you see—couldn't you find that out, uncle?"

"And it's Mr. Dan who always likes to be consulted even about a bit of fish for dinner; he was, perhaps, afraid of puttin' himself too forward, I'm for ever forgettin' that."

Then the pair trudged on in silence.

Sam too and his companion became taciturn. It was only when they approached the village that the elder man grew strangely agitated. Once, twice, thrice his lips parted, but the words would not come. Wrapt up in his own sombre meditations Clem did not notice

he other's changing countenance and painfully controlled :motion.

"Mr. Clem——" he began, then his voice failed ıim.

"What might that be you were a-sayin'?" Clem ısked when his name had been repeated.

They were now within sight of the Swan Inn and a few hundred yards more would bring them to the /illage—and the world.

Desperately resolved not to let this opportunity slip ɔy, Sam now turned round sharply, confronting his com-ɔanion:—

"Clement Fison," he said in a tone quite new to the other's ears, the like of which now fell on them for the first time, "don't lie to me, it's you and no other who are breakin' that poor little mawther's heart!"

CHAPTER XXII.

MARTHA'S CHAMPION.

LIKE all moral cowards Clem could show bravado upon occasions. Sam Weedon was the last person of whom he stood in awe, and although the appeal disconcerted he met it with upstart rebuff.

"I'd thank you to drop that, Mr. Weedon, and I'm in a bit of a hurry, so, day to you," he said and would have slipped by.

"Look you here, Mr. Clem," Sam replied, planting himself in his way, "if you think this here matter is none of my business I can prove the contrary, but that's neither here nor there just now. What I want to know, aye, and will know afore we part company, is this, are you a-goin' to act paltry by that young woman, she the best conducted and most deserving in these parts, or are you not?"

"Now don't act the fool by meddling and making with other folks' concerns," Clem answered, turning very red. "I've never got a girl into trouble yet and I don't mean to——"

"I wouldn't boast of that if I was you, Mr. Clem, there are more ways than one of making a poor mawther wish herself in her grave; and you're not stone blind like Master Rose. You saw as plain as I did the water

a-runnin' down Martha's cheeks just now, and you can't say as how you don't know the ins and outs of it——"

Then with difficulty keeping back his own tears Sam took a quite different tone; he had known Clem from his boyhood, he really liked this well-intentioned, serviceable but somewhat weak young man, and it pained him to utter reproaches. But Martha's sweet pathetic image was ever before him, shutting out every other consideration.

"Now don't be angry with me, Mr. Clem," he pleaded; "why we've summered and wintered each other this twenty year and have never had words before now. I'm intrudin', I know, but it so happed that I came across Martha in the drift last evening; she was a-cryin' as if her heart would break, and though she named no names I sniffed what it was all about. And when I saw her just now ready to sink into the earth at the sight of you and her tears a-flowin' like raindrops from the eaves I knew how it was."

Sam's emotion touched his listener, no insensibility, only a weak will and flightiness of purpose seduced Clem from the straight path, the manly *rôle*. He now became his own apologist.

"I'm very sorry I ever took notice of Master Rose's niece," he began, "what on earth I could be thinking of I don't know. You see, Mr. Weedon, I don't stand in my own shoes. If I were to marry out of my own station I should be a toad under the harrow as long as I live, Dan would never let me have a moment's peace."

"Talk that gibberish to the horse marines, Mr. Clem, you're no *non compos,* Mr. Dan can't shut you up in Bedlam; there's naught to hinder you takin' any girl to

church you're pleased to fancy, and I'm sure Martha Rose is one no man need be ashamed of, and not without eddication neither, she'd beat many a farmer's daughters there." All this while Sam was willing one thing and wishing another. Success in pleading Martha's cause would mean losing her for ever, failure might mean a chance, just a chance, of gaining his own suit. Compassion, the higher impersonal love, vanquished self. "There's another thing," Sam continued calmly, "you've always been a good livin' young man like your brother, none can say aught to the contrary, and you've both always given every man his due. But as time goes on it won't be a pleasant thing for you to think on, Mr. Clem, that you made up to a good girl and then left her in the lurch; I mean——"

Clem now looked utterly woe-begone.

"I've told you how it is," he said, in a tone of profound self-humiliation. "As I said just now, I'm mad with myself for having led Martha on, that mad I sometimes feel ready to jump head first into a horse pond. You don't know my brother as well as I do, he's going to marry a boarding-school miss, and if I don't do the same he'll make my life a hell upon earth——"

"Martha had good reason then to think you would take her to church," Sam asked with changing voice and features.

"I tell you I'm not the sort of chap to get girls into trouble; I did mean to marry Martha, on my life I did, but I can't put Dan's back up, there's the long and the short of it."

"Then be damned for a sneak!"

And now beside himself with indignation Sam dealt

a fearful blow. Clem reeled and fell, the upturned hoe coming in contact with his head. Sobered by the sight of the young farmer's greyish white features and streaming blood, too terrified for utterance, Sam could only moan and wring his hands, then, as one under the influence of drink or a narcotic, he fumbled for his red cotton pocket-handkerchief and bending down vainly tried his hand at stanching the wound. At this hour of the day the village seemed asleep. Only reiterated blows in the adjoining smithy and a far off echo of barndoor flail broke the noonday stillness. Wheat cutting had not yet begun, but harrowing, drilling and rolling kept folks afield, not returning till three o'clock, the ploughman's dinner-hour. Just now however happened what always, and as it seems unaccountably, happens in similar cases.

No one apparently was abroad but these two men, the one lying inanimate on the ground, the other paralysed with terror. How was it that before Sam's lips could utter a cry or his trembling fingers could fashion a rude bandage the actual population was there? Had some stray rook cawed a note of alarm? Had breezes wafted a sign? Be this as it may, forth they came, crones and patriarchs, who, pensioned by the relieving officer on three and sixpence a week, had plenty of time on their hands. Matrons who quitted their soapsuds, for gleaning was in prospect and must find them free, white-haired little bors and mors, too young as yet even for thistle-spudding or rook-scaring, and, lastly, the three or four Misters in the place, innkeeper, blacksmith, cobbler and carpenter, entitled by virtue of their vocations to the afore-mentioned dignity, labourers

still being called Master as were citizens in Queen Elizabeth's time.

"Didn't I tell you so, Mrs. Bent?" said one grandam to another; "I know as well as anyone what ails folk, and Mr. Clem has looked that bad lately I was sure he'd drop down in a fit one of these days."

"It's murder, that's what it is, I lay," said a second wiseacre. "Mr. Clem was after a prowler in the fowl-house t'other night, and he's been laid in wait for."

"Hie off to Ipswich for a doctor."

"Hold up his head, Sam."

"Sluice his face with water, Mr. Weedon."

"Undo his neck handkerchief."

"Fetch a drop of brandy, Jimmy."

"Run for Mr. Dan, Sarah Jane."

Similar shouts only increased Sam's sense of helplessness. And no one as yet lifted a finger to help him, open-mouthed, awe-struck, all stood stock-still.

Fortunately, just then two horsemen cantered up, Dr. Cornelius and Mr. Fenwick returning from their professional rounds. Spick and span were both, and beautifully groomed, Belisarius and Don Juan matched their riders. Down they jumped throwing the reins to lookers-on.

"What is this rumpus about?" asked Dr. Cornelius. Then assuming an air of tremendous authority he added: "A nice lot you are, to stand gaping whilst a fellow-creature bleeds to death, here, just make room——"

"I did it, sir, and no other," poor Sam faltered, his knees knocking together, his face now white as Clem's. "We had words, and I was that angered, I didn't know what I was a-doin'——"

Dr. Cornelius motioned him aside with a killing look. "The parish constable will hear what you have to say, my good man, my business is with this poor fellow you've apparently been trying to do for," he said. Adding to Fen in an undertone, "As I live, Fen, the fair Arabella's admirer. Humph, what the dickens is up now?"

"I haven't killed him, sir?" Sam got out, not however too agitated to miss that allusion to Martha's rival. Clem was doubly false, then? He had broken with the schoolmistress in order to marry another, a fine lady from the town?

"Will someone fetch water, a sponge, and brandy, I say?" shouted Dr. Cornelius, without paying the slightest heed to Sam's piteous appeal. Raising his patient a little he stanched his wound, moistened his lips from Fen's palmful of ditch water, then he felt his pulse and his heart, all the while wearing a look of sinister gravity.

"I haven't done him mortal hurt, sir?" again implored Sam, now crying like a child.

"My good fellow," replied the nameless physician with no little asperity, "will you allow me to do my duty in peace? Where's the parish constable, I say?"

The functions of carpenter, undertaker and village constable were combined in the person of Mr. Mudd, a worthy man, meek as Moses himself, but in his official capacity ever inspiring awe.

"Hale me to prison, Jeremiah, I'm not a-goin' to fight the law," groaned Sam.

"Samuel Weedon," replied the embodiment of police and justice, "I know where to find you when you're

wanted, but you'll be pleased to follow me home and answer a few questions in the Queen's name."

The crowd fell back dumfounded, one and all becoming aghast as Sam himself.

Hitherto Mr. Mudd's concern had been with outsiders only, gipsies, tramps and loafers, come to-day, gone to-morrow. Not within living memory had any native of Oxborrow or the neighbouring villages been lodged in Ipswich Jail. The very notion made alike young and old shudder.

Trembling from head to foot, Sam was about to follow his awful neighbour when, with a commanding wave of the hand, Dr. Cornelius interposed.

"Just wait a bit, please, Mr. Mudd, till my colleague here and myself can report on the case, and please someone be so good as to fetch Mr. Fison, the elder, at once."

Another half-dozen now ran towards the farm, the remnant of the crowd looking on ruefully.

Between farmer and ploughman there was nothing to be called intercourse. The positions of squire and tenant were not more strictly defined than that of the brothers Fison and their labourers. But Clem was a general favourite, nothing uppish about him, folks would say, and that feelin', always a-lettin' gleaners follow the waggon and findin' jobs in winter for three-quarter men.

Sam, too, enjoyed everyone's good will. The village wags jested at his expense. Rips like Adah Rose made fun of him. He was a proverbially poor farmer, and had a reputation of stinginess. Nevertheless, the general feeling for him was more than neighbourly.

As he stood thus, never any prisoner at the bar

presenting a more crushed appearance, the host of the Swan came forward.

"Jeremiah Mudd," he said, in a self-proclaiming but unsteady voice, "here's one who'll stand bail for our neighbour yonder, my hand upon it, aye, and though the bum-bailiffs should make themselves at home in my keepin'-room till Old Michaelmas Day."

"And here's another ready to do the same," exclaimed the miller, who had suddenly dropped from the clouds; "though I must say, Sam, I no more looked for a harmless chap like you to be brought afore judge and jury than a new-born babe. And what you could be blacking Mr. Clem's eyes for is beyond me."

Astoundment and compassion now gave way to curiosity. The miller but voiced the general stupefaction. The why and the wherefore of the quarrel, when would folks learn these?

CHAPTER XXIII.

SOPHIA.

"ALL this to-do comes of my handing over the parish to a *locum tenens,*" growled the Reverend Mr. Paglar to his lady after lunch. "Be very sure of one thing, Priscilla. The seven plagues of Egypt and worse may visit the place, small-pox, diphtheria, Asiatic cholera, the lot bottled up into one, off you and the children shall be packed to Felixstowe or Walton-on-the-Naze, I shall stay behind, and keep my nose on the grindstone. This has been the first holiday I have taken since entering Holy Orders and it shall be my last."

"Really, Cyril, you talk at random," was Mrs. Paglar's reply. "Are we to be mewed up here for the rest of our days because of this disgraceful affair? Sophia is now past twenty-two, it is our bounden duty to show her something of the world, in fact give her opportunities. And you cannot hold yourself responsible for the morals of these people," the rectoress nicely distinguished two social zones, that open to the clerical world and that not similarly favoured. "In these days when every village is tainted with Methodism it is as much as you can do to drag them to church by the hairs of the head."

"By the scent of a red herring you mean," gruffly

retorted the irate cleric, "if it weren't for Christmas beef, coals and flannel petticoats how many should I entice from the meeting-house I wonder? And how many would show their faces at the table if what's left of the wine didn't go round? You remember what Master Smy was overheard saying to a neighbour when asked if he had stayed behind one sacrament Sunday. 'Yes,' replied the old rascal, 'and I might as well have stayed at home for I only got one damned drop.'"

And despite his ruffled mood the rector could not resist a chuckle.

"I have again and again begged you not to repeat that story, Cyril," was Mrs. Paglar's tart rejoinder. "The custom of letting the aged poor drain the sacramental cup as I have always said, ought to be abolished."

"Oh! don't grudge them a taste of good wine to warm their poor old stomachs,—I for one always wish there was more left."

"You will of course at once dismiss Martha Rose and let the old man, her uncle, know that we shall require no more of his fish?"

"That's easier said than done, my lady; the little baggage shall be sent to the right about with a flea in her ear, I warrant you; but Brett can't lose half a day whenever you want a couple of mackerel. The garden would get into a pretty state. The worst of this business, however, is the noise it will make. The Ipswich papers will of course be as full of it as they were the other day of Rush's trial for murder. I shall never hear the last of it, and I shouldn't wonder if I got an unpleasant epistle from the bishop."

"Nonsense, Cyril, much worse things happen elsewhere. Clement Fison was not murdered and though we must be prepared for the worst, we don't know that he has got the girl into trouble."

"Well, if all we hear is true and he promised to marry her he is a greater nincompoop than I took him for, that is all I can say. But Sam Weedon tops him. If that old idiot gets a month in the house of correction I, for one, shall not beg him off. He must take his chance and may think himself uncommonly lucky that it isn't a job for the hangman. I am sorry for Dan, on my soul, I am, a very superior young man for his station he is, so much so that I have sometimes wished he would make up to Sophia."

"My dear Cyril, to think of our daughter marrying a tenant farmer!"

"She might like it better than not marrying at all, which will most likely happen."

"If we neglect our parental duties and keep her perpetually shut up in this benighted place," interrupted his spouse.

"Please, ma'am, the baby has woke," said a voice at the door.

Mrs. Paglar was seldom without one of these calls upon her time and attention, and she now quitted the room to minister to her eleventh bantling and sixth daughter.

"May I come in, papa?" said another voice, that one of sweetest tone.

"What do you want now, Sophy?" asked the rector in the same rough but fatherly voice. "Master Tommy

kicking your shins again or Eleanor fibbing? Bring 'em here, a nice spanking they'll get."

"The children are all good as gold to-day, papa, and so delighted at the thought of helping cook with the currant picking for jam."

"Oh! like the rest of us, good as gold when it answers their purpose. Pretty stomach-aches they'll all have to-morrow, that's certain, but as your mother has given leave I've nothing to say. Well, what do you want to bother me about then?"

The apparently ungracious reception did not at all indicate Mr. Paglar's feeling for his first-born child. Both parents simply adored her. The rest, brothers and sisters alike, were put off with very matter-of-fact affection. Sophia stood apart, she seemed, indeed, in their eyes a being too good for the common world.

Yet the girl's existence was one which her compeers of to-day would find intolerable. By turns nursery governess, head nurse, barber, housekeeper, Sophia perhaps fared no worse than many another eldest sister of populous vicarage or rectory. The confidence placed in her was regarded as rich reward. Never perhaps for a moment did she deem the fates unkind. If at any time a wistful look stole over that fair face it was after reading *Paul and Virginia* or *The Bride of Lammermoor.* There were so many poor clergymen's daughters in the world! Sixteen she knew of about her own age. Was it at all likely then that love and romance would ever fall to her own share? And despite the round of maternal cares daily before her eyes she persisted in the fond foolish dream of girlhood, love was something wholly celestial, the quintessential felicity, the crowning joy of

mortals, only to love, to be loved, dreamed ingenuous Sophia, only to love and live indeed!

"I want to intercede for Martha Rose, papa," she began, a bloom beautiful as the petal of a blush rose mantling her cheek.

"Oh! of course, I expected as much," was the rector's bluff reply, he ever delighted in plain speech. "You women are like thieves, you always stand by one another; had Eve had a sister Adam would have got all the blame of the apple, that's very sure."

Again Sophia beautifully blushed. As if she were treading on forbidden ground, she got out the words:—

"Was it a crime in Martha Rose to be loved, papa?"

"What business had she to listen to a farmer? It all comes of Methodism though the Church catechism is dinned into her ears often enough, goodness knows. Not a day passes in the school but she hears that it is her duty to labour in that state of life unto which it has pleased God to call her. And I warned her long ago that unless she minded her P's and Q's she would be packed off bag and baggage."

Sophia still lingered.

"But if Clement Fison promised to marry her, papa?"

"My dear Sophy, you've got King Cophetua and the beggar maid in your pretty head. Is it at all likely that a well brought-up substantial young farmer, almost a gentleman-farmer, indeed, would marry old Rose's niece? And what is more, his brother would never let him so lower himself."

"But, papa——"

"Well out with your last but, my love, for I must

be off. I have a couple of churchings on my hands this afternoon, and must see the whole posse of 'em, I mean all concerned in this precious hullabaloo."

"I only wanted to say, papa," and as she spoke Sophia secretly reproached herself for a Macchiavellian argument, "that I should be very sorry to lose Martha for my own sake, she is so pleasant to have to do with in the schoolroom."

"There are as good fish in the sea as have come out, I daresay; but I will hear what she has to say for herself anyhow," he added, in a softer tone.

"Thank you, papa."

With tears in her eyes Sophia withdrew. What had rendered her advocacy so persistent? She hardly owned to the fact, but so it was, Martha's love story had rendered her doubly interesting. Thus poetised the village schoolmistress became a wholly new personage. "Oh!" thought the romantic girl, "how cruel to separate two beings who love each other, simply because they belong to different conditions of society."

His churchings over, and more blunderingly than usual had they been got through, Mr. Paglar set off for Burridge, before quitting Oxborrow making a call or two.

A clerical round in those days nicely indicated social standards. Into one cottage after another he butted head first, not announcing himself by so much as a tap of his crome stick. Did a chair piled with linen fresh from the hedge stand handy, down went clean shirts and shifts onto the sanded floor, and he would take possession, although an empty one might be within reach. Were a boiler suspended from the spirket he would lift the lid, sniffing the pork pudding and potatoes. He behaved,

indeed, precisely as if he were in his own house and no one resented the attitude. With many another the Reverend Cyril Paglar was about as fitted for the pastorate as for the post of admiral of the fleet. But kind-heartedness covers many failings. As folks said, "The rector's bark was a sight deal worse than his bite," if he bullied and badgered them one day he would do them a good turn the next. When poor old Mr. Fisk lost his wife and, being a carpenter by trade, wanted black trews with which to appear at the funeral, only corduroy being in his possession, Mr. Paglar had lent a pair of his own. If that was not acting the gentleman what was? And though he called meeteners everything you could think of—lor' bless you!—so long as they went to church for five or six Sundays afore Christmas they got their coals, beef and flannel coats* like the rest!

The rector's off-hand ways and his lady's high-handed behaviour were taken much as a matter of course. As well rail at having to support a family upon nine shillings a week with only the house staring them in the face, no other harbour of refuge in old age. Some were born to eat roast beef and plum-pudding every day, others to sit down to flour dumplings and fat pork year out and year in; so had the Almighty willed it.

Oh, the immeasurable, incomprehensible long-suffering of these simple farming folks! Search our domestic annals through and you will find no more astounding feature than this, the ploughman's stolid resignation and laboriousness. From January to December without a single holiday his task was to prepare the soil for an-

* Petticoats were so-called at this time.

r's ingathering, garner the golden harvests in which ıad neither part nor lot. Seasons came and went, stars appeared and slowly took their westward way, ormly, unchangingly as ant and bee, these enrichers he earth plodded on, their reward a pauper's garb skillet!

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE POT AND THE KETTLE.

PARTLY by reason of personal calamity and partly on account of his call, in other words, the function of lay preacher, Master Rose always held his head high, no bending of the knee to Baal for him he would say. Whilst respectful to the quality, as the phrase went, he refrained from subservience. And as blindness evokes universal sympathy, and the Rector of Burridge was a very different person to his colleague of Oxborrow, the Reverend Mr. Shafto and his unorthodox parishioner were on excellent terms. They would even enter into theological discussions, the clergyman sometimes pretending that he had the worst of it. With his colleague it was otherwise. Despite his rough good nature Mr. Paglar could not bring himself to tolerate Methodism or any assumption of the pastoral funtion outside the Church of England as by law established. He bought the blind man's fish because no one else hawked it about, and he had employed Martha because well-conducted young women, conversant, as one of her scholars put it, "with the rudiments of reading" were not as plentiful as blackberries. Moreover if Martha and her sister attended their uncle's services, regularly once a day they might be seen at the parish church.

Mr. Paglar found the old man sunning himself in his doorway; perhaps the Paradisaical vision of the world's sublimest poet did not confer deeper peace than the fish-salesman's contemplation of the Celestial City. Just now it was not without an effort that his thoughts had soared above earthly things.

The events of the day before had disturbed him greatly, only by little and little could he mentally recover himself, sojourning again in the delicate plain called Ease, "entering the country of Beulah whose air was pleasant and sweet, finally talking with the shining ones as they approached the city that shone like the sun." But such heights were reached at last.

The Reverend Mr. Paglar's abrupt greeting dispelled rapt imaginings.

"Good day to you, Master Rose; I need not tell you who I am or on what errand I have come," he blurted out.

"I should know your voice from a thousand, sir; but only the Lord searcheth the heart."

"Now, do for once, my good man, leave off quoting Scripture to me, and don't look innocent as a sucking babe. What on earth should I come for but to speak about this harum-scarum niece of yours? A nice commotion she has thrown the place into, and if one of my parishioners doesn't get his quietus and that old simpleton Sam Weedon the hangman's rope, she may think herself uncommonly lucky——"

"Oh! sir," broke in Martha distractedly, she had just entered the house from behind, "don't say that," and she looked ready to fall on her knees before the pair.

"What on earth can it matter what I say, Martha Rose?" was the rector's severe retort, "but be so good

as to retire for awhile to your chamber, I want a few words with Master Rose alone."

With difficulty controlling herself Martha led her uncle indoors, placed a chair for the visitor, then climbing the bare wooden stair she shut herself in her little back bedroom.

Mr. Paglar humm'd and ha'd, cleared his throat, tapped the floor with his stick, but no expected apology was forthcoming.

Provokingly self-complacent the blind man remained dumb.

"All I can say is, Master Rose, that I am astonished at you. Why, you appear as unconcerned as if Martha and her goings-on were no affair of yours! But I won't say that I'm not to blame myself, I ought to have bundled her out neck and crop months ago when I discovered that she was running after Clement Fison."

"If anyone, man or woman, high or low, has aught to say against Martha's character, sir, let them do so to her face——"

"Humph!" cried the rector in high dudgeon. "You approve of such conduct, do you, Master Rose? You think it becoming in a young woman of humble station to listen to the flattering tongue of a man above her? You have forgotten, I suppose, what invariably happens in such cases? It's all one to you then whether or no Martha finds herself in the same plight as Lizzie Bennett, her character gone and another to work for?"

Even that bitter taunt did not awaken an outburst. Blind Rose's faith in self stood him in good stead. Mr. High-mind might regard Faithful as a sorry scrub but God was no respecter of persons.

"Mr. Paglar," he began deliberately, the words, "your reverence," never passed his lips. "I'm advised of all that has fallen out, and the best part of last night was spent by me in self-communion and prayer. And now I see my way clear. When the Moabitish damsel gleaned after the reapers of Boaz, he a mighty man of wealth, did he not make her his wife? And when Esther the Jewess who had neither father nor mother obtained grace and favour in King Ahasuerus's sight did he not set the royal crown upon her head? Is Clement Fison a greater man than Naomi's kinsman, or the king which reigned from India even to Ethiopia?"

"Good gracious, Master Rose, what in the name of commonsense are you driving at? You don't mean to tell me you are so gullible as to believe for a moment that the young man really intended to marry Martha? Why you must have taken clean leave of your seven senses!"

"My six senses, sir, seeing that, doubtless for my soul's good, the Lord has been pleased to deprive me of one. I mean to say, Mr. Paglar, and I'll hold to it as long as there is breath in my body——"

"Oh, you needn't be at the trouble of telling me that, I know well enough there isn't a donkey on the common that can hold a candle to you in respect of obstinacy——"

"I mean to say, sir, that if Clement Fison got over Martha—so far as my belief goes, she's done naught to be ashamed of—by promising to take her to church, all the while meanin' the contrary, he's not the man I took him to be, and Sam Weedon only gave him his deserts."

"You are really past all bearing, Rose, I can't stay

to hear any more," quoth Mr. Paglar rising. "I wish Mr. Shafto joy of his parishioners, I'm sure."

"Nay, tarry a moment, sir, hear me out. I'm always willin' to hear all you have to say——"

"Hear all I have to say? I should think so, indeed, you forget to whom you are talking, Master Rose."

"Small fear of that, sir," the blind man replied with a significant smile. "But I know you're well meanin' at bottom, and you don't terrify me."

Mr. Paglar reseated himself and the other continued:—

"Seein' as how Martha is of my own flesh and blood it was my bounden duty to fathom this mystery——"

"Mystery, fiddlestick! Why the matter is as plain as a pikestaff; but cut your story short, please, for I'm in a hurry."

"And after questionin' Martha and ponderin' on all she told me, I can't bring my mind to be hard upon her. Blame a young woman for encouragin' a young man who takes her fancy and promises to act upright? You might as well blame a butterfly for settlin' on a flower——"

"My good man," the rector broke out, again rising, "I perceive that I might sit here till this time next year to no purpose. Don't you see, won't you see, that it was highly improper in Martha to think of Clement Fison at all? What does the Church catechism inculcate? But I forget that I'm talking to a Methodist. Well, I wash my hands of you all, and inform Martha that I shall at once look out for another school teacher. Good morning."

And knocking over a couple of chairs in his haste

to be gone the rector strode away, banging the door after him.

Martha ran downstairs aghast. "Mr. Paglar has brought bad news, uncle?" she asked.

"He couldn't well have brought worse," was the reply.

"Don't keep anything from me! Mr. Clem isn't dead?" she almost shrieked.

Master Rose uttered a contemptuous exclamation.

"There are things a sight deal worse than death, Martha, the day is a day of trouble and rebuke but it shall not be one of blashemy, the Lord's will be done."

"Mr. Clem——" began Martha.

"Ar'n't you bowed down with shame at the sound of his name? Little did I think who would bring my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave!" exclaimed her uncle.

"I have lost my place?" the girl got out, poignant anxiety now taking a personal turn.

"That is a flea-bite, Martha, its the bein' looked down upon that is the red pottage."

Martha's cheeks flamed, with something of the old man's spirit she cried:—

"Of what use for me to speak since you don't believe me, no one can impinge my modesty."

"There are other things to be ashamed of besides carnal-mindedness, Martha. Was it nothin' to act double-faced by one who has been a second father to you? Was it nothin' to set your sister a bad example, she too given already to consort with Mrs. Bat's-eyes, Mrs. Light-mind and Mrs. Know-nothing? Was it nothin' to be teachin' those dear children placed under your charge the wickedness of a lie and all the while be practisin' deceit yourself. And," here in his indignation the blind

man touched the tenderest point of Martha's conscience, "the Lord was pleased to visit me with an infirmity; I had no one like Raguel the Medianite to whom I could say as did Moses when about to journey through the wilderness—be thou to me instead of eyes. I could only go by faith, and if there was one person in the world I trusted it was you."

"Uncle, uncle—!"

"And what have you brought upon others? Mr. Clement a-lyin' maybe at death's door, peradventure called to his last account without time for preparation. Sam Weedon, the harmlessest chap about here, haled to prison, perhaps transported to Botany Bay. Can you close your eyes for thinkin' on all this misery?"

"Uncle, I believed what Clem said, I did indeed."

"As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout so is a fair woman without discretion. Better for you to have been ill-favoured as a poor hopping toad than puffed up with men's praises. But I wasn't a-goin' to let Mr. Paglar treat my own flesh and blood like cast clouts and rotten rags, and if so be that we're turned out of house and home to-morrow I'll go up the steps of the House as cheerfully as Abraham set out for the land of Canaan."

"There's more needlework to be got here than Adah can do, uncle, and I'll stitch my finger to the bone rather than you should come to want."

"Brag is a good dog but Holdfast is a better, and words fill no bushel, Martha. Then there's another thing. For all the world like the man in the Interpreter's house you did but take to yourself the straws, the small sticks and dust of the floor, whilst one stood by proferring you a crown. There's no use in denyin' it, Sam Weedon

wasn't always a-comin' here about bran and bee-skeps, and he for one meant honourable by you——"

"Would you have me marry a man for what he had got, uncle? But I'll put on my bonnet and go to Oxborrow, I'll plead for myself with his reverence," Martha exclaimed, anything seemed more endurable than the blind man's reproaches.

"Bide, bide, Martha, the less you show yourself abroad the better just now——"

"And make folks think I'm ashamed of anything I've done! not I," retorted Martha.

"And," Rose went on, "you must ask Mr. Paglar's pardon, in course, but go no farther, I've some pride in me left, Martha; I'd rather not be beholden to anyone, were he the mightiest in the land. And you might go on your knee to him, he'd as soon take the gad-about Adah as you."

"Who' a-talkin' about me?" exclaimed a careless voice.

By no means cast down at the strange turn affairs had taken, exalted rather than abased by her sister's sudden notoriety, and triumphant in the fact that for once she was not for herself a culprit at the bar, Adah was in irrepressible spirits.

"I've some news for you, Martha," she cried in great excitement, "you're to step up to Sam Weedon's this very minute, I met Jimmy Amos at the corner a-runnin' his hardest to say so. The bum-bailiffs, I mean, a posse of police, are a-goin' to take him afore judge and jury to-morrow, and he wants to see you afore he goes."

CHAPTER XXV.

IN SAM'S KEEPING-ROOM.

WITHIN living memory no villages had less cc tributed to the annals of crime than Burridge and C borrow. An occasional fray on the bowling-green or the alehouse parlour, a surreptitious shaking of dams trees or purloining of turnips made up the sum offences against the law. In adjoining parishes soi letter carrier had been tempted by a half-guinea i prudently trusted to the post, and a dairy-maid or tv despite the customary searching of their boxes bef departure, had carried off a neck-ribbon or pair of sto ings. If at local quarter sessions the recorder did i wear white gloves, the tint was often very pale. Sir Margaret Catchpole's time, no Ipswich woman had be transported to Norfolk Island, the tragedy of Ma Martin discovered by a dream and Rush's double cri were exceptional blots on the East Anglian escutche

Folks were mostly of a hum-drum, placable dispc tion, and if law-breaking was less frequent than in soi places, going to law was almost unknown. But for lea and wills Mr. Atwell's firm would have had a so time of it.

Small wonder, therefore, that the events of the l four and twenty hours had thrown not only the nei bourhood but all Ipswich into commotion. Clem Fis murderously set upon by Sam Weedon: the first p

haps as good as a dead man or, what was far worse, injured for life; the second in danger of oakum-picking or even a transport ship, and all about a little schoolmistress. Here, indeed, was matter for question and answer, You don't say so! Who would have thought it! Well, I never! Did you ever! and so on, such remarks being accompanied by shakes of the head and dark looks. Every keeping-room, every sanded kitchen became a black divan, a *Vehmgericht* deliberating on matters of life and death. For the nonce daily concerns no matter how important lost all interest. Wheat-cutting was at hand, the lords of the harvests had been nominated; sea-faring men, discharged soldiers and other extra hands had been engaged; masters had tapped harvest beer; housewives had made their plum-puddings. The names of Clem Fison, Sam Weedon and Martha Rose occupied people's thoughts from morning till night to the exclusion of other things. And whilst each wise-head knew exactly what was about to happen, each all the same wanted to learn his neighbour's equally fixed opinion.

Meantime the central figure of the little drama awaited the issue in a very complex mental condition. More completely crushed a man could hardly be. A mediæval prisoner crossing the Traitor's Bridge did not regard himself as more lost to his friends and the world than the farmer now anticipating an appearance before the bench. For if of very humble stock and of circumscribed pedigree Sam Weedon had no forebears to blush for, to the best of his knowledge neither kith nor kin had ever stood in the criminal's dock. The mere notion threw him into a sweat and set his knees shaking.

Yet just as a knight of old, condemned to the block for having served some unhappy cause but too well, would glory in his fatal devotion, so Sam repeated to himself, "I did it for love of you, my dear, for love of you," the thought somewhat consoling him. Another thought made his bosom glow. Martha should understand his conduct, and not Martha only should be enlightened; before the squires on the bench, before judge and jury at quarter sessions, he would speak out unabashed. He was sorry for what he had done, but Clem Fison had acted paltry by as well conducted a young woman as this side of London could show, a young woman——

When he got to this part of his speech Sam's eyes moistened, his throat grew choky and he took a turn. It was difficult to frame the concluding sentence. Folks would perhaps jeer at a man of his years for making such a confession, yet the full truth must be told. So again and again he pondered, finally but not quite satisfactorily concluding his peroration thus:—

"'A young woman, your worships, a young woman, gentlemen of the jurry, I'd been fool enough to think might have gone to church with the like o' me.' It isn't exactly what I want to put together but I can't better it, no sort of use tryin'," he thought, then he turned his attention to another matter, the coming interview with Martha, what he had to say to her and the best way of saying it.

If Sam agitatedly listened for a light footfall on the gravel no less disturbed was Martha's mood as she approached the farm. Why she had been sent for she could easily explain. Sam wished to have her pardon

and in so far as possible to excuse his rash act. She must, of course, hear all that he had to say on his own behalf and the sooner the better. That point dismissed, her thoughts flew from lover to lover. Could she hate the one and forgive the other, loathe the betrayer and smile upon the champion? Could she feel pitiful towards both?

Such questions remained unanswerable. Upon one matter only was her mind quite made up. She should never forgive herself, never, never. And so long as Clem recovered what her own lot might be was of little account. If her uncle consented she would take a situation as nurse or serving-maid in the Shires. Snailing along, unwilling to arrive, feverishly anxious to return, she reached the drift, witness alike of rapturous awakening and cruelest disillusion. Tears welled up afresh. She thought of Clem lying on a sick bed from which he might never rise, of Sam Weedon's jeopardy, of her uncle's sorrow. Oh! had she but resisted the posy on the school-room sill all might have been well.

Fortunately no one was in sight. She had dreaded the half-hour's walk as much as the errand itself, but as her lucky stars would have it encountered no one. Drying her eyes, assuming outward calm, she now hastened forward. What she should say, how she should behave, she did not in the least know. Matters must go as they would.

To her surprise the door was opened by Mrs. Amos, the good woman wearing her Sunday gown of black bombazine and black silk apron. Usually communicative and hail-fellow-well-met with everyone, to-day she

spoke in whispers and looked, Martha afterwards related, as if she had just laid her master in his coffin.

Motioning rather than inviting the visitor into the keeping-room and wiping her eyes, Mrs. Amos disappeared.

A feeling of positive awe came over Martha as she entered the once cheerful little parlour. Dressed as if for church or market Sam now came forward, at first much too agitated to speak. By the table sat a gentleman evidently from the town, his black suit and solemn aspect reminding Martha of an undertaker, whilst the rich plum-cake and decanter of port wine on the chiffonier equally suggested hat-bands, white chokers and black gloves. Funeral cake hereabouts was ever of a certain richness, perhaps because it was felt that creature comforts should counterbalance mental gloom.

"Day to you, Martha Rose," Sam got out at last, withholding familiar handshake. "This is the young woman, Mr. Atwell," he added by way of introduction.

The lawyer's clerk, now proudly occupying the position of a full-blown solicitor, merely inclined his head as he sat, the parchment in his hand thrilling Martha with apprehension. Was she here confronted by some emissary of the law, about to be examined on oath?

"Sit ye down, Martha Rose," continued her host, placing a chair.

Then noticing her tremulousness he fetched the cake and wine and filled three glasses to the brim.

"You won't say no to a glass of wine, Mr. Atwell?" he said.

"No, indeed, nor to a second, unless you prudently put back the decanter," was the reply. Despite his

long-facedness, Mr. Atwell always had his little joke upon such occasions; in fact, he usually joked when away from home. The best wives in the world do not always appreciate their husbands' pleasantry and Mrs. Atwell perforce followed her sister-in-law's cue.

"Help yourself and welcome, Mr. Atwell," poor Sam rejoined; "and you, my dear," the words slipped out unawares, "you look as if you wanted something to keep up your spirits, I'm sure."

Martha accepted the glass of wine with trembling hand.

"Steady, steady there, shore up the young woman's glass, Mr. Weedon, your old port is too good for dyeing carpets. And don't let my humble self intimidate you," he added to Martha. "I'm not going to cross-question you in wig and gown, you know."

"Will you tell her your errand, Mr. Atwell?" asked Sam. "I'm for all the world hulled about like a wisp of hay in a hailstorm."

Where had these homely Suffolk folk got their Shakesperean phraseology? Nobody knows. In these remote villages when Queen Victoria was young rustics would speak like Henry VIII. in the play.

"With all the pleasure alive, first allow me——" So saying Selina's papa emptied his glass, smacked his lips, swallowed his cake, smacked his lips again, then adjusting spectacles and unfolding the parchment he began: "I have to inform you then, young woman——"

"Martha Rose, please, Mr. Atwell."

"I have then to inform you, Martha Rose, that in view of his present — ahem — precarious — circumstances——"

"If I'm sent to jail it will be the death of me, I know it will," groaned Sam, wiping his eyes.

"We will, if you please, leave that hypothesis out of the question. Prison or no prison, Mr. Weedon, sooner or later, I hope I am sure that it will be later, you must submit to the lot of mortality, in other words, quit this earthly scene. Into the events of the last two days, young woman, we need not go either. The only facts I need dwell upon are these, that to-morrow my client here has to appear before the bench at Ipswich on a charge of unprovoked assault, and fearful—I hope, without cause—of the consequences, he has decided upon the following step——"

"It's little enough I have to leave, my dear," interrupted Sam brokenly, "but stock, crops and valuation should run into something like——"

"Permit me to continue," Mr. Atwell exclaimed in a tone of official rebuke. "He has then decided to put his house in order, in other words, to make his will. Now, generally speaking a man bequeaths what he possesses to next-of-kin, but certain contingencies with which you are already acquainted warrant our friend, so at least he thinks, in acting otherwise. One and all, we are slaves to the tender passion, young woman——"

Not in the least divining the upshot of his speech, Martha listened blankly. Mr. Atwell's last words roused her. Now white, now red, she could hardly take her eyes from the speaker's face.

"The tender passion," resumed Mr. Atwell, "brings a skep of bees, so to speak, about a man's head before he knows where he is, it makes him say what he wouldn't

say and do what otherwise he never would have dreamed of doing——"

"Sure-ly!" interposed Sam with a deep sigh. "Who'd have thought that I'd ever stand afore judge and jury and for——"

"Allow me to pick up the thread of my discourse, Mr. Weedon. As I was explaining to you, young woman —I beg pardon, Martha Rose—the above mentioned contingencies known to no one better than to yourself, have decided my client upon a line of conduct which is certainly—ahem—ahem—rather romantic and unusual. I have then to inform you that the document in my hands, in other words, a will, drawn up according to the instructions of Mr. Samuel Weedon and only awaiting attestation, names you sole legatee of everything he possesses."

"Stock, crops and valuation, my dear, what money lies in the bank and the bits of furniture," put in Sam.

Martha sprang from her chair.

"You must not do that, Mr. Weedon," she cried, "I am nothing to you."

"You mean the other way, I know that I am nothing to you, Martha Rose," Sam replied with sorrowful dignity. "But seeing as how——" he broke off,—"Lor! sir, make her see things clear. My poor head is all of a seethe like a vat full of boiling beer, or a churn when the butter won't come," he added.

"Replenish your glass, my good sir," said the lawyer's clerk, "permit me to do so for you—and for myself." So saying Mr. Atwell again had recourse to the decanter, then after a sip or two, he resumed: "The matter is as plain as pikestaff. Seeing, young woman,

that Mr. Weedon, as he has fully explained to me, allowed resentment to get the better of his judgment, that is to say, that he gave Mr. Clement Fison a well-deserved but rather nasty punch of the head——"

"He won't die, sir?" Martha cried, the mention of her lover's name banishing every other thought, "he won't die?"

"My business is with law, not physic; and see, yonder most opportunely come his medical attendants, let us hope, Mr. Weedon, bringing favourable news."

True enough two horsemen could now be seen cantering along the drift. Arrived at the upper end Fen jumped down to open the gate for his colleague, then taking a field path the pair approached Sam's dwelling.

Martha made for the door.

"Ah!" Mr. Atwell said, seeing her agitation, "the tender passion! what havoc does it make with us all! But wait, young woman, those gentlemen may be able to allay your natural fears."

"And my meanin' is good, Martha," Sam began, now reverting to the familiar name, "you won't say no to this business."

"She can't, you forget that a man is free to do as he likes with his own," put in the lawyer's clerk. "That principle is the basis of our glorious constitution."

"And you haven't a truer well wisher, as I've always said, than this one here," sighed Sam.

But Martha could only point to the parchment with a negativing gesture. Then curtseying as she passed Mr. Atwell, and pressing Sam's hand by way of mingled thanks, apology and would-be forgiveness she hastened away.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DAN'S BLACK TUESDAY.

MARKET day was the axis on which farming existence revolved. Seasons might be good or bad, occupations might be hired at fixed or corn rents.* Now a light and farmer would declare, perhaps with a broad expletive, that his barley crop was so thin it had been blown into the next parish; now a tenant of good mixed soil might vaunt of his ten coomb of wheat per acre, one and all relished Tuesday's market.

The more provident and those who lived near Ipswich would have an earlier dinner than usual and content themselves with a glass of sherry at the Crown and Anchor before ordering their gigs. Those who came from a distance and could better afford it indulged in the market dinner, roast sirloin and batter puddings yellow as gold, one day; a boiled leg of mutton and caper sauce, the next; a goose at Michaelmas, plum-pudding and mince-pies during Christmas varied the fare.

A sight it was, those jolly farmers hasting to market, their horses well groomed, their gigs shining, themselves spruced in top hats and broad-cloth, clean shaven, ruddy, Pickwickian of aspect. So nearly did one resemble

* Rents rising and falling according to the price of wheat.

another that yeoman England of the forties was focussed in a single personality. Nor did resemblance end here. Social standards, modes of life, what did duty for religion, were like as peas. Exceptions formed the merest remnant, a hardly appreciable minority.

For the first time in his life Danvers Fison would fain have shirked attendance at market, and wished the Corn Exchange at the bottom of the Orwell. Long and painfully he had debated the question of staying at home. Why not for once absent himself? But if, like his brother, Dan was a moral coward, he fully realised the slur of poltroonery. He knew well enough what construction would be put upon his non-appearance and the very notion was odious. Hitherto no more self-satisfied and no more ornamental figure had appeared on the Cornhill. Good-looking, scrupulously dressed, a trifle stilted perhaps in speech and manner, the young farmer was ever regarded as a superior person, a haughty boy, folks had formerly called him, and high and mighty here and there he was styled now. But the market, that is to say, the farming world taken collectively, felt proud of him. He was admired, heard attentively, quoted.

The thought of being subjected to disagreeable questions, hints and innuendoes and of appearing to shrink from these was galling, which he most dreaded he hardly knew.

But wheat cutting would begin in a few days, Clem lay abed, there were samples of corn to show and household stores to lay in before harvest; lastly, there was the usual tea-drinking with his betrothed. Yes, he must go, hang it, go he must.

Very slowly and reluctantly he filled his little paper

bags, the one containing the silver, the other the gold, that is to say, the samples of barley and reddish Talavera wheat. Then having shaved and changed his dress he sat down to Saranne's providings, the usual cold meat, apple turnover and jug of ale.

How he congratulated himself to-day that he had never like Clem indulged the good woman's propensity to chatter!

In Dan's presence Saranne ever felt uncomfortably repressed, her condition resembling that of a half-opened ginger-beer bottle.

The enforced self-containment at an end she would literally explode, ploughman, baccus boy, barring these, yard-dog, cat, stray hen—or the pump!—being talked to, confided in, asked counsel of for an hour at a time.

When she had something on her mind that Master must hear, willy-nilly—Dan was always "Master," to Saranne—she would irritatingly hover about him, rattling glasses, letting fall knives and forks, stumbling over chairs, and taking other means to attract attention.

It was a habit Dan much disliked, but Saranne was a pearl of great price and anything seemed more endurable than one of her tirades.

To-day the habit fidgeted him beyond bearing.

"Can't you say what you want?" he asked sharply, looking up from his apple turnover.

"Mr. Clem, sir," began Saranne,—Master never terrified her, she used to say, but she felt that it was as much as her place was worth to rub his back the wrong way.

"Well, what of him now?" Dan said, his voice having a sharper edge than before.

"I was only a-goin' to say, Mr. Dan, that as to-morrow is churnin' day and I shall have to be ris by four o'clock, and as Mrs. Reed can't sit up with Mr. Clem any more this week, shall I get Mrs. Catt, she as lay out your poor ma!"

"Anyone you like," was the curt reply, Dan rising as he spoke.

"And if Mrs. Catt can't oblige you, Mr. Dan, there's Mrs. Kerrich, a very willin' woman and always sent for when there's sickness about. Lor-a-mussy what is my head a-runnin' on?—there's Mrs. Frost, and as she takes the eggs and butter she should be thought on, and if so be that she's nursin' Mary Ann, her son's wife who's expectin', there's Mrs. Potter, and excuse me if I'm a-taken' too much on myself, but Mrs. Studd was here just now, and though she didn't say as much she looked it, my meanin' is, she would feel slighted I know if she hadn't her turn; then there's Mrs. Rowe, poor soul——" Saranne positively paused to take breath, her catalogue seemed no nearer ending than Sancho Panza's of the goats.

"And if I might be so bold to mention it, Mr. Dan, Mrs. Reed said that though the beer was so good she felt it trickle down to her great toe, it lies cold on the stomach o' nights, and that next time she'd thank you for a thimbleful of gin to keep her spirits up, and Mrs. Catt, I'll be bound, will say the same."

"Oh! let them have what they like, only don't bother me."

"Then you'll leave out a little gin, to-night, Mr. Dan; seein' as how Mrs. Reed had a shillin' a night, I s'pose I may offer Mrs. Catt similar?"

Dan muttered impatient assent and quitted the table, Saranne thus haranguing the table or maybe the fragment of apple turnover in her hand:—

"I say, that beat's all! Don't it now, my dear? Mr. Clem, poor lamb, abed with his head that bad he don't know who's a-speakin' to him, and Mr. Dan, his own brother, off to market without so much as peeping at him through the door! But I'm glad I made bold to speak about the gin, and Mrs. Catt shan't come two nights runnin'! Sarah Kerrich shall have tea, supper, breakfast and sixpence in turn and so shall Mrs. Frost and t'others. Well, *they* won't bear Sam Weedon any malice nohow."

No Mrs. Gamp lorded it over rural sick beds. When a baby was expected in hall, rectory, or perhaps farmhouse, a monthly nurse would be hired from the town. Upon other occasions labourers' wives officiated, homely, zealous empirics, only too content to sit up all night after a hard days' work afield and over the wash tub, their weather-beaten faces softened into benignant smile, their hands hardened with toil tenderly smoothing the invalid's pillow, painfulest vigil being more than remunerated by sixpence and what in those unsophisticated times was commonly termed a bellyful.

The first person Dan encountered was his uncle, and if tactless friends and officious acquaintances are unwelcome when we have fallen on evil days, still more oppressive is the free and easy condolence of kinsfolk. Avuncular sympathy moreover is apt to take a paternal tone and have the hateful ring of "I told you so."

"A pretty piece of work, this," began the elder man.

"You tell me something I happen to know, uncle," Dan made tart answer.

"Perhaps I can tell you something you don't know though. But how's Clem?"

"He'll do, they say. You needn't fret about him, uncle."

"Right glad am I on't; you've as good as given me fifty pound."

"And I'd give twice the money if this confounded affair had not occurred."

"In course, in course. But I wasn't so much taken by surprise as you might think."

And not without gusto uncle Ephraim narrated the adventure of the turkey-cock, how rendered suspicious by the noise and Clem's manner he had just peeped out, catching sight of a bonnet and shawl.

"When the cat's away, the mice will play, Dan; you were on the other side of the water, you know," he added slily, the remark almost conveying reproach, making Dan feel that the visit to Paris was responsible. How just now he hated himself, everybody and everything!

"You might as well have dropped me a hint, uncle!"

"I wasn't going to make things unpleasant between you, though I did speak to Clem, I should have blamed myself if I hadn't done that. But now, Dan, take my advice. When he gets about, don't kick up a bobbery, let bygones be bygones——"

"That's easier said than done," Dan said in a hard tone.

"And the young woman, so leastways I've heard tell, is none of your harum-scarums, but a neat, well-

conducted little body, folks say. Things might have been a sight deal worse."

"I don't know what you would call worse, uncle, as long as Clem lives he will be the laughing-stock of the place. I tell you, I've the greatest mind in the world to leave him to get on as he can—make off myself for the Shires."

"No, no, Dan, you've done nothing to be ashamed of, and there's your great-uncle at Eye who would be as pleased as Punch to have poor Clem; he told me at the last fair he was past seeing after things; why not put it into Clem's head?"

Dan uttered an impatient ejaculation. Much Uncle William would like to have Clem now, he said, then pleading hurry approached the Corn Exchange.

No young soldier for the first time confronting shot and shell ever felt more of a coward; a veritable sense of nausea momentarily overcame him. Then struggling manfully against such weakness he entered the building, as he did so coming upon another person he would fain have avoided. Whom, indeed, would he not have avoided to-day?

"I've been looking for you everywhere," Fen said with a superior air, the air invariably adopted by some condolers in misfortune. "A decidedly unpleasant business this for you, Fison."

Why was the hearty "old chap" of former days omitted? Like many another Fen felt that there were certain things incumbent upon those whom he honoured with his friendship, one of these was an utter aloofness from scandal and ill repute, the reputation of Cæsar's wife must not be more above reproach.

"You needn't din that into my ears," was the subacid retort.

"Oh! I meant no offence, and I'm deuced sorry for you, I am indeed. But what was that brother of yours thinking of, dangling after a young lady like Arabella and all the while carrying on with a labourer's daughter?"

"You had better ask him. But I see a man yonder I want to offer my samples to. Good day."

"Good day. I'm really very sorry for you," and so saying the medical assistant, as dashing a young spark as market day could show, sauntered on.

Everyone commiserated Dan, a young man so well conducted, so gentleman-like, everyone really liked Clem, but for the life of them the neighbours could not behave discreetly. Clem's escapade must perforce be commented upon, treated jocularly. Some acted the part of Job's comforter, others treated the matter lightly, one and all could commiserate Dan and enter into his feelings, a different matter to holding their tongues.

These farmers for the most part escaped scandal, from the onset to the grave furnishing scant material for the foul-mouthed. Rarely, indeed, did any like Falstaff become their neighbours' theme. Having secured a good occupation, as a tenant farm was called, they generally married, often aspiring to Shakespeare and the musical glasses, in other words, wedded a governess, some young lady who taught the piano, conchology, wax-flower making, the use of the globes, and many more accomplishments in rectory or village doctor's house.

To play the gay Lothario with village mawthers, imperil good repute and run the gauntlet of public opinion, was looked at askance.

us it came about that one and all really pitied
ll the more so because he had ever kept his head
ıriding himself upon such conduct. No one could
ything against him, he was in the habit of boast-

siness over, another and equally painful trial had
faced. How would the Atwell household or rather
Cribb view the matter? Fortunately if Dan's in-
were here engaged, so much could hardly be
f his heart. "They may take me or leave me,"
d to himself; "if Mrs. Cribb thinks I'm not good
ı for her niece, let her find somebody else who is,
all."
suming a nonchalant even airy port, he ran up the
pipe-clayed steps and pulled the bell.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MRS. CRIBB ON HER DIGNITY.

No sooner had Dan entered the dining-room where tea was spread than he realised the change that had come over the spirit of his dream.

Mrs. Atwell received him with her usual chirpy, apologetic kindness. The self-effacing little woman ever wore the air of a dependant, of some poor relation or adopted waif and stray anxious to repay with double interest every gift bestowed upon her insignificant self. Dan too, had always been a favourite, and quite naturally and sincerely from her lips came the stereotyped utterance!—

"Dear Mr. Danvers, I do feel for you so much, so very much."

The conveyancing clerk looked in ebullient but rigidly repressed spirits. Nothing so much exhilarated Mr. Atwell as a piece of gossip, above all some affair in which he played a part. This business had outwardly rejuvenated him by at least five years.

"Good evening, Dan," began the prospective papa-in-law. "So the magistrates' examination is to take place to-morrow. But what an inflammable harum-scarum set you all are at Burridge to be sure! After tea I'll tell you what I've been about your way." With a chuckle

and jocular rubbing of the hands he added:—"On my word, the whole thing is as good as *Margaret Catchpole.*"

The romance alluded to was the one book that at this period alike high and low, wise and simple, had read, if not able to do so with their own eyes, by proxy. The Ipswich girl who a generation before had stolen her master's horse and ridden to London, who after twice escaping the hangman's rope was sent to Botany Bay, there ending her days in prosperity and to the general edification, was no less a local heroine than Joan of Arc in her native Domrémy. Not to know the marvellous history of Margaret Catchpole was to prove yourself no Suffolker.

"And I must say there's some excuse both for your brother and the other, that little hussy isn't at all amiss, she's got beautiful eyes anyhow. But who on earth would have dreamed of a miserly old fellow like Weedon putting himself out about a girl!"

Mrs. Atwell, whose hand was on the tea-caddy, looked up with inquisitiveness; her husband was on the point of delightfully mystifying them when the door slowly opened and the tall, erect, angular figure of Mrs. Cribb appeared. Carrie immediately ladled out the tea, the lawyer's clerk took his place at the table, and Dan offered his hand with the usual, "I hope I see you well, ma'am?"

"As well as can be expected after all that has occurred, Mr. Danvers, thank you," was the chilling reply. "I hope you have not waited for me, Carrie?"

Mrs. Cribb was always waited for, as she knew, and

there was no privilege she set more store by, the deprecatory speech was mere matter of form.

Her coming changed everything, after conventional and embarrassed inquiries after Clem, Mrs. Atwell's mind was wholly given to her sister-in-law's tea, the host took refuge in nothings. Dan sat down wishing himself at Hanover. A long pause ensued. The atmosphere had been suddenly surcharged with the spirit of Blair's *Grave,* Young's *Night Thoughts* and Hervey's *Meditations among the Tombs,* a slightly depressing blend to the most cheerfully disposed.

And as he seated himself Dan noticed that no plate was laid for Selina.

His betrothed was as far as possible removed from a Beatrice, she was neither born in a merry hour nor shrewd of tongue. But Edith of the swan's neck did not possess a more beautiful throat, white as the driven snow, rounded to perfection, and her hair, its two shades of rich brown having an edge of gold, were good to look upon. She was moreover gentility personified, and if she did not sparkle and distract, she was the sort of woman no man need be ashamed of seeing on his arm. Appearance, dress, manner betokened a style not indigenous in farm-houses.

Courtship had been here no thrilling affair, hardly did either heart beat more quickly when the lovers took a turn in the garden or sat together in the summer-house. But the *tête-à-tête* were looked forward to, and if bringing no rapture, at least brought no disillusion.

"Miss Selina is not at home?" Dan asked.

His hosts glanced at their oracle. There was this advantage in the family compact. If Mrs. Cribb ruled

ll three members with a rod of iron, she invariably re-
eved them of disagreeable duties. Most people heartily
islike the notion of looking, saying or doing things that
re either uncivil or unpleasant. Here Mrs. Cribb did
ot object, she made an exception to her rule.

"We have thought it just as well, Mr. Danvers, to
end my niece away for a little change; she is staying
vith friends in Rutlandshire till this unfortunate affair
lows over. The similarity of names and occupations—
them—as you can well understand must necessarily lead
o imbroglios. Already in Selina's hearing you have
een mistaken for your brother."

"Thank Heaven, we are not another pair of Siamese
wins," Dan answered with considerable temper.

"Under the circumstances such confusion is inevit-
ble," Mrs. Cribb continued; "and any well brought-up
irl would feel as strongly as Selina does about it. There
s also that equally painful affair about her friend, poor
rabella."

Dan winced. He could control his feelings better
han most people, but what was Mrs. Cribb's object in
hus exasperating him he now asked himself. Could it
e any other than the breaking off of his engagement?

It was in his mind to accept the challenge with some
uch retort as this: "If you think, my good lady, that
ecause my brother has made an ass of himself, I'm not
good enough for your niece, I'd thank you to say so."

More expedient counsel prevailed, Mrs. Cribb also
modified her tone. After her fashion she liked Dan,
"a chaste young man," was her description of him, and
a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. The
aristocratic young curate of the Tower Church who, as

her brother put it, had lately been "sniffing round the place," in other words, hovering about Selina before Dan's declaration, might or might not have intended to come forward. She scorned the notion of doing anything unladylike. But it was a law of nature that folks suffer for their relations' wrong-doing. Dan must be made to see that the condescension was here all on one side.

"I feel for you deeply, Mr. Dan, I do indeed. How changed is your position in a brief space! So true are the poet's words:—

> When self-esteem and other's adulation
> Would cunningly persuade us we are something
> Above the common level of our kind,
> The grave—

or some unseen calamity, Mr. Dan—

> gainsays the smooth-complexioned flattery,
> And with blunt truth acquaints us what we are."

Another awkward pause followed.

"Do have some of these strawberries, out of our own garden," Mrs. Atwell said, anxious to change the subject.

With what relish could Dan have thrown the fruit at the castellated structure of white crape opposite!

Repressing a second retort and helping himself, he remarked:—

"You are better gardeners than we are in the country, Mrs. Atwell, I've hardly tasted a strawberry this year."

Hoping that matters would now run smoothly Mr. Atwell put in:—

"I suppose you'll be cutting wheat in a day or two, Mr. Dan? the glass is high, you'll have fine weather."

Mrs. Cribb was not accustomed to be slighted. Before Dan could reply the castellated structure in white crape shook ominously, and fixing her eyes on her *vis-à-vis,* she began:—

"As I said just now there is some excuse for the hastiness of your remark, I must, however, express my surprise at your so far forgetting yourself as to fail in respect to me. In the welfare of my brother's only child I hope I take a proper interest, and I add that I expected you to take a much more serious view of this lamentable affair——"

Dan's lip tightened but he sugared his strawberries with well-affected unconcern. On his host's account he made up his mind to remain calm.

"And that you would enter into my—our feelings," Mrs. Cribb went on. "As you know, my brother, sister-in-law and myself looked very favourably on Selina's prospects; we had, so at least we thought, every reason to congratulate ourselves. But——" even that exasperating "but," did not unseal Dan's lips.

"But——since, however, my remarks do not appear worth listening to, I refrain from pursuing the subject, and as I have done tea, Carrie, I will retire."

Thus saying the terrible aunt with solemn giraffe-like movements marched out of the room, Mrs. Atwell following.

"Pity you didn't say just a word to my sister, no matter what," said the lawyer's clerk when the door had closed upon the pair. "When a woman is in a devil of a temper, swear at her, call her anything you can think

of, threaten her with a redhot poker, but never hold your tongue. To hold your tongue is to madden her."

"Well, I won't madden Mrs. Cribb again in a hurry," Dan replied. "I'm still at Miss Selina's service, and glad to see you at any time—but don't expect me here next market-day."

And in spite of his old friend's remonstrances he caught up his hat and away he went.

"Confound that woman's impudence," he said to himself as he hastened towards the Crown and Anchor. "She may keep her niece and her money for all I care; I'll never enter the house again, anyhow, as long as that old harridan lives in it."

There is generally a way out of toils and tangles if a strong will is set to work, and such was the case with Dan Fison now.

He thought and thought, pondered and pondered, weighed and weighed pros and cons. As he made his round, over his supplementary tea, on his pillow, he debated the question—how should he get out of this quandary?—and before sleep was indulged in an answer had been found.

The mention of his great uncle at Eye furnished a solution.

Next day after scattering corn for the poultry with the usual coop, coop, coop, mixing milk and barley-meal in the proportions grateful to porcine appetite for the pigs, giving out beans, corn and oil-cake for horses and stock, finally breakfasting, Dan sat down at his bureau to write.

Mr. William Fison of Eye now in his seventy-eighth year was a gentleman-farmer on a considerable scale and

ı bachelor. His nephews, nieces and great-nephews and ıieces were legion, and, as he had long since announced hat the former or their children would share and share ılike, he had not been compassed round with sweet ɔbservances as might otherwise have been the case. For :he most part holding aloof from his relations, showing ıo partiality to any, he was almost forgotten, or if re-nembered at all it was more in the light of a trifle in he savings bank than anything else.

But Dan and Clem were the sons of his eldest brother's :ldest son, a fact which perhaps explained the hint lropped to Uncle Ephraim. What if the old man really vished to have a nephew with him in his declining years, ɔne of his own family instead of bailiff or steward, who ɔerhaps could secure his lease, and profit by all the noney he had laid out on improvements? The more Dan thought of the matter the likelier it seemed.

So in the plainest, most business-like way he put ɔen to paper. His great-uncle would understand how much this affair of Clem's had upset him, and how readily he should quit the place. About his capacities as a farmer it was not for himself to speak, but if cleaner land could be found in the county he would like to know where and so on and so on. In one sentence he took almost the tone of a pleader, in the next made it clear that the other would be an immense gainer. And when the carefully indited epistle was sealed and stamped Dan halted by the window like one n a dream.

Was he really meditating this wrench, perhaps quitting he home that had been his father's and grandfather's ɔefore him?

To quit one Suffolk town for another is in these days the merest bagatelle. Fifty years ago the moving from Ipswich to Eye almost seemed emigration. Tenant farms as in Dan's case were often handed down from one generation to another, daughters as well as sons inheriting the lease. Without a tittle of ownership, without any hold whatever on the soil, folks became rooted to an especial spot, by virtue of usufruct it stood in the light of a possession. Thus Dan felt towards his own occupation. But he was far from being sentimental, and what price are we not all prepared to pay for wounded vanity?

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FOR THE LAST TIME!

VERY sorrowfully Martha Rose unlocked the schoolroom door for the last time. Harvest had begun, little scholars would not re-assemble before September, and a new teacher was appointed, but before giving up her key Martha must scrub, sweep and put the place in order.

With an aching heart she hung up bonnet and shawl, lighted a fire, then whilst the water was heating, began to sweep. She knew the worst now, the door might be burst open, neither the rector nor Mrs. Paglar would trouble her peace any more. Dismissal at least brought immunity from reproach. She was a stranger to her former employers.

For that little schoolroom built on to the church was as completely under rectoral domination as the sacred edifice itself. What, how and by whom the children were taught concerned Mr. Paglar and nobody else. Parents paid their penny a week, it is true, that fact did not in the least imply anything in the shape of contract. Mrs. Paglar might make a raid on little girls' ringlets, a fashion savouring too much of gentility; Mr. Paglar might box little boy's ears, fathers and mothers hardly felt sure of possessing any right to complain.

Within those bare, white-washed walls, however, Martha had spent proud happy hours. There was a certain dignity about the post of village schoolmistress. The daily, "Mornin' to you, teacher," of little girls and boys, the conduct of the shrill-voiced choir, the timidly offered flowers or first fruits were all so many testimonies to a superior position. Not as yet was a girl belonging to Martha's class styled "Miss"; the "teacher" on children's lips did duty for a more exalted appellative.

She had taken pride in her work, too, profiting to the utmost by her uncle's instruction, ever trying, as she expressed it, to make a better scholar of herself. If certificates, prizes and medals were not in fashion, the triumph of getting an unusually apt pupil to read a verse or write his own name was richest reward. How would the children take her removal? Would they run away at her approach, thinking that she had done something wrong? Their parents also, surely she should be looked down upon, perhaps shunned, by these?

Then she recalled Clem's posies on the window-sill. How could she be so simple as to think that he would marry her? He might mean well, but he was not his own master, everyone knew that. She only was to blame. Oh! why had she allowed herself to love him? Why did she love him still?

The water bubbled on the fire, time was going, any moment the rector or Mrs. Paglar might burst in; forgetting everything but her vanished dreams, Martha sat, still weeping sore.

On a sudden the inner door was opened with such noiselessness that she did not perceive it.

"You poor Martha Rose," murmured a sweet voice,

and before she could rise Martha felt a soft palm pressed upon her burning forehead.

"You poor Martha Rose," repeated Sophia, "I feel for you so very much."

"Oh! Miss Sophia," Martha said, springing up and seizing her pail, "what will your papa or mamma say if they step in? past ten o'clock, and the floor not wetted!" Then she managed to get out: "Thank you, dear miss, it's like—" sobs stayed her utterance—"it's like water sprinkled on coals of juniper," she added, "to hear a kind word when everyone is against me."

"Don't say that, Martha," Sophia replied, taking her hands in her own. "Sit down and calm yourself, my parents have driven to Ipswich and sent me to see how you were getting on; besides there is no great hurry, you have the whole day before you."

"And to think that I'm never to enter these walls again, never, never, and through nobody's fault but my own, it's that that cuts, miss."

"Who does not commit faults at some time or other?" put in the young monitress sagely; "and I said the same thing to papa, Martha; I pleaded for you, I did indeed."

"You'll have your reward, Miss Sophia, never fear; you've laid the foundation," Martha said, now speaking more collectedly; "and I can't tell you, miss, what balm in Gilead it is to me to see your kind face and to know that you speak up for me."

"I will always do that, Martha, never fear, and as I said to papa, I think many other girls in your place would have acted as you did. What a joy to be loved better than anyone else in the world," here Sophia's

sweet face grew red as a rose, "and how hard to wake up one morning and find that it is all a dream!"

"You have just put my own feelings into words, Miss Sophia, I couldn't better it. Mr. Clem did my eyes more good than my heart, such a gentleman he always seemed to me, and when he called me his only dear till death should us part, those are his very words, miss, how could I help believing him? And I've been no runagate to virtue, or I should be ready to sink into the earth as I stand afore you now."

"No need to dwell upon the subject," Sophia continued with a slight blush, and the sapient air of sixty at least, "and I will not dwell upon Mr. Fison's conduct either. Take my advice and put him out of your head. Regard forgetfulness as a duty."

"If I only could forget him, miss; if I only could!"

"You must try, Martha, morning, noon and night you must try. Remember that there are another person's feelings to be considered."

"Oh, Miss Sophia, I've already got a basketful of sewing, and I'm not a bad hand at seating men's trousers and such jobs. Uncle shall not come to want if I have to stitch my fingers to the bone."

Sophia paused, then began a little shyly:—

"I was not thinking of Master Rose, Martha." Sophia was simplicity itself, but the rector's eldest daughter must perforce regard herself an authority. With the same prim air she continued: "Of course I know what has happened, Martha. Clement Fison, as I said just now, you must henceforth regard as an entire stranger. But the other—you know of whom I am speaking—has behaved, as papa says, like a man, and

if in a fit of indignation he has placed himself under the ban of the law, it is on your account. And Mr. Weedon is not in Clement Fison's position, he has relations who are working people like yourself. Why should you not marry him?"

In too desperate a mood to hear more, Martha started up and seized her pail.

"Dear miss," she said, "Sam Weedon is as well meanin' a chap as wears shoe-leather. He would walk barefoot to London town to please me, I know, but I could not marry him, not if all the parish asked me on bended knee. You were saying a minute ago, miss, what a joy it must be to be loved by someone better than the whole world beside, but you don't know, may you never know, miss, what it is to be forsaken. Love is a weed, Miss Sophia, like darnel, it chokes up the beautiful wheat; you may sweat in wet and dry, spud and dig and harrow, you can't get rid of it. There is one who has spoiled my life and the lords of the earth couldn't make me forget him." So saying, she put on her coarse apron, turned up her sleeves, filled her pail and got out soap and scrubbing brushes. "I can't cry any more, miss," she said; "but there's nothing like a bit of hard work that must be done when your heart is heavy as lead. I shall feel better when to-day is over."

"Yes, time with God's blessing will bring you peace," Sophia replied. "I will leave you now, and mind, I shall come and see you before long. And mamma says that she has no objection to give you some sewing."

"I'm much beholden to Mrs. Paglar," Martha replied

stiffly. The rectoress's condescension came as almost an insult after Sophia's loving-kindness. "And as long as I've breath in my body, I'll bless you and pray for you, dear miss," she added.

"Never fear but that you will be remembered in my prayers also, and you will see me soon at Burghersh. Good-bye, good-bye."

Again pressing the schoolmistress's hand and with a smile of angelic encouragement and sympathy Sophia passed into the vestry. As she crossed the churchyard and rectory paddock her face wore a wistful look.

Should she ever be called any man's only dear till death should them part? Love and romance seemed to lie outside her own life. How many poor clergymen's daughters she knew who were growing grey in spinsterhood, only the vicarious motherhood of elder sisters being vouchsafed them! On her fingers she could count at least a score of well-favoured, well-educated, amiable girls, one and all by many years her seniors, who had apparently no prospect whatever of marrying, who to the best of her knowledge had never had what was called a flirtation. The first-born of six sisters, her father's sole income being derived from his incumbency, how could she expect that her own case would prove an exception to the rule? In all probability she would grow old without any experience of a man's tenderness, rich in parental, brotherly, sisterly affection, but unfamiliar with love as a cloistered nun, her only romance that of the novelist's page!

Sophia checked these thoughts with a feeling akin to shame. How her father adored her! How helpful was she to her mother! And alike in schoolroom and

nursery what confidences, what fond caresses were hers!

Half-way she was met by a little girl employed as odd maid.

"Please, Miss Sophia, Betsey sent me for you, missus won't be home for another hour, and baby has waked up that tetchy she can do nothing with him. And please, miss, Miss Anna Maria has fallen on the gravel and scratched both knees, and Master Tommie has cut his thumb, and I've been a-lookin' for you high and low."

It was wonderful how baby's tetchiness, Anna Maria's bruised knees and Tommie's bleeding thumb soothed Sophia's discontent.

With a look almost of beatitude on her sweet face she re-entered the house and ministered to the little ones' wants.

CHAPTER XXIX.

MRS. AMOS SEIZES THE BULL BY THE HORNS.

DURING the last sixty years physical and social changes have run a neck and neck race in East Anglia. When Martha Rose locked the schoolroom door on a certain August day in 184—the entire country might be described as a field of the Cloth of Gold; alternating sweeps of wheat and barley spread map-like under the warm blue breezy heavens. Herbage, rich-leafed turnip and other crops were mere accessories, apparently afterthoughts. The staple wealth of the community, the farmer's pride, the labourer's hire, depended on corn. A good harvest was the verdict on the year. That being pronounced there was no more to say.

Small wonder that unusual alacrity was shown at this season, and that for once throughout the twelve months easy-going folks should display the bustle and alertness of the city bred. The very spirit of enterprise seemed abroad, and touching was it to witness the ardour of reapers and ingatherers, of those to whom the piled-up waggons and crowded stackyards meant a few weeks' higher wages and a daily allowance of harvest beer only. Down to the three-quarter men and baccus boy, all would tap any weather-glass that came in their way and interrogate the heavens, feverishly

anxious as sea-faring men about to set forth on a voyage.

A strong fellow-feeling existed among these sons of the soil, and when it was known that Sam Weedon was to spend fourteen days during wheat-cutting in Ipswich jail hardly a neighbour but proferred his services. Like Penelope Mrs. Amos was literally besieged with offers.

"There get along with you all," was her good-natured answer to Mr. Cage the miller and the rest. "If me and my Jimmy can't manage master's bit of corn, we ought to, that's all I can say. I told him how it would be. I knew you'd all on you* come a-buzzin' about like bees, but though he'll thank you kindly, I'm sure he'd rather not be beholden. Lawks a mussy me, it won't be the first time I've cut corn or carted it neither, it's as easy as kissin' your hand when you know how to set to work."

So dismissing her employer's sympathisers with a flea in their ear, the valiant woman and her Jimmy put the shoulder to the wheel. Wearing a white cotton sun-bonnet with deep curtain, bed-gown instead of "top" and short lilac print skirt, she was afield whilst the dew yet glistened "on herb, tree, fruit and flower," laying low stetch after stetch of reddish gold corn before breakfast. Inspired with similar zeal Jimmy would unlock the fowl-houses, scatter corn for the poultry, feed the pigs, bullocks and horses, milk the cows and, as he expressed it, "be ready not for one bellyful but for two," a full hour before the usual time. Then loquaciously

* E. A., of you.

and with the consciousness of having more than earned harvest delicacies, slabs of cold plum-pudding, a taste of Derby cheese and an extra pinch of tea, both would sit down to breakfast.

As the siege of Troy to Greek warriors and the taking of Jerusalem to crusaders crowned them with glory, so Mrs. Amos's harvesting proved her one triumph. No prouder, more mettlesome being existed just now than this elderly serving-woman, temporarily taking her employer's place, glorying alike in its labours and responsibilities.

"True as my name is Karren-heppuch, which was Job's daughter, and I was married in church to Abraham Amos, him as was the young Master Fison's headman for nigh on thirty years, I don't know what it is, Mrs. Frost, to have a dry thread to my back. But that's nothin', what's the worst is that I can't sleep o' nights; there I lie, a-restin' my poor legs and wantin' naught but to lose myself for a minute! I couldn't do it if you gave me a bright pound. And only think, though I can't sleep when it is my place so to do, I'm for ever a noddin' out of season. Would you believe it, Jimmy found me a-snorin' over the bakin' t'other day, faggots a-cracklin' in the oven, my dough ready for loaving and Trow and the cat a-snarlin' over a dollop* I'd let fall? Well, Sunday's a-comin', I shall go to church mornin' and afternoon, and I hope his reverence's sermons will be as long as usual. Don't I always have a beautiful sleep in the corner of that dark pew under the gallery!"

And if Mrs. Frost or any other neighbour suggested

* E. A., a small lump.

that she should procure help, her answer was a contemptuous:—

"Not if I know it! It's not folks' legs or livers that carry them through but their sperrits, and as I say to Jimmy, 'Jimmy, bor,' says I, 'never knock under, and do as we should be done by is as much godliness such as us can take in.' Poor master, he won't think the worse on us for sparin' him a few shillins, I lay."

Mrs. Amos, and here she was not alone, did not regard Sam Weedon's short imprisonment quite in the light of an indignity. Clem Fison had clearly got his deserts and one thing was certain, henceforth even Ben Catchpole, Jerry Codd, and the like of them, would think twice before jeering Sam as they had done in former days.

"I never talk to a hudderen like my Jimmy about females," Mrs. Amos confided to the butter woman, "and I've nothin' to say against Martha Rose, nor, that I ever heard tell, has anyone else in the parish, but how a man of master's years could put himself out about a chitteface* like that wholly gets over me; now her sister Adah, with her big black eyes a-starin' at you, might well make a chap stumble over a pail of milk any day. But Martha, why you have to look twice before you see her at all. Well, some on us like one thing and some another. My poor husband called out for pork and sage puddin' the day afore he died, and his brother's wife, true she's an Ipswich woman, can't abide the smell. Howsomdever, as I say, one of us isn't another, we're all as the Almighty made us, and there's worse than Martha Rose about, though I don't want a missis here."

* From chichface, Chaucer, Bailey; formerly applied in Suffolk to a pale, slender girl.

On the day before Sam Weedon's return Mrs. Amos did condescend to get a little help. Out doors and in things must be put in apple-pie order; the farmyard was swept, fowl-houses were cleaned, pig-styes littered, whilst brushing, brooming and baking were the order of the day. So for once her place in the wheatfield was taken by a neighbour whilst she killed the fatted calf.

"Master will come back lookin' half-starved. I lay, Pharaoh's lean kine's a fatted bullock to him," she said to Jimmy, as the pair shovelled harvest cakes, apple turnovers, rusks and other local dainties into the capacious oven. "I know how Tom Last looked years ago when he came out o' jail for snarin' one of Squire Millison's hares, a walkin' skeleton he was, poor chap, and the water stood in his eyes as he told us how he couldn't bear to begin his basin o' spoon vittals, for by the time he'd emptied it he was almost as hungry as before. Yes, Jimmy boy, the squires and such like who sit on the bench, as they call it, ought to season themselves, to try the spoon vittals and the pickin' oakum and the like, then perhaps they'd not be so free with their fourteen days."

Doubtless in a perfectly constituted society some such procedure as Mrs. Amos suggested will be put into practice. Legislators of Utopia will shrink from imposing untried penalties upon their fellow-creatures. Before beginning the judicial vocation they will impose upon themselves the novitiate of experience.

Fourteen days! How easily are these two words uttered, how next to nothing is the meaning thereby conveyed to the speaker! But let each stage of the cruel ordeal be tested by an imaginary culprit, let every bodily

privation be undergone, every phase of mental anguish be conjured up, much seldomer should we hear then a sentence often so wholly disproportionate to the fault.

On the morning of Sam's exit from jail Jimmy was up betimes cleaning his master's gig. Then with face well soaped and towelled at the baccus pump and in his Sunday corduroys, he set off for Ipswich. Mrs. Amos meantime prepared a Gargantuan breakfast, fried sausages, piles of hot buttered toast and slices of souse cheese or brawn; never before had Sam's table been so laden.

The sound of gig-wheels as she afterwards confessed made her heart go pit-a-pat, but affecting an everyday air she opened the side door. Every farm-house had three doors, the front only used on the occasion of weddings or funerals, the side used on market days, the back upon other occasions.

"Mornin' to you, Mr. Weedon, I hope I see you well," Mrs. Amos said as her master descended from his high perch. A gymnastic exercise was that getting out of an early Victorian gig.

"I thank you, Karrie"—Sam Weedon always called his housekeeper by her Christian name when ailing or in trouble—"but I never expect to feel well again; I'm only fit for bed and a visit from the parson."

"How you run on, Mr. Weedon, sure-ly!—it makes me feel bad to hear you. Now just sit down and take your breakfast as you should do, then go into the wheat-field and help Jimmy and me; nothin' like a good sweat to get rid of low sperrits. And have a drop of rum in your tea."

So saying she piled his plate with sausages, cooked

to a turn, and placed beside him a little stack of hot buttered toast.

"No, Karrie, I couldn't touch 'em, I couldn't if you gave me ten pound," Sam said, pushing away the platefuls; "but a cup of tea without milk and, as you say, a drop of rum in it, I will try my hardest to get that down and maybe a sopped crust or two."

"Just you come here, Jimmy," shouted Mrs. Amos to her hopeful, who was munching a hunk of cold pork pudding in the kitchen. "You'll find room for this toast, I lay, and if it don't make you feel as if you were a gentleman born and bred nothing will on this side of the grave."

Off Jimmy trotted with the tempting pile, his eyes transfixed by the sight, hot buttered toast not only shutting out every other thought then but for hours after; indeed, he talked of it, dreamed of it, recalled it for days after, till reproved by his mother.

"I wouldn't go for to make myself out no better than a hog if I was you," she said severely.

The tea, flavoured with rum, and soaked crust, above all Mrs. Amos's cheerful tirades, proved stimulative. Sam began to look more like himself.

"Prison!" he said, "I should like to see the inside of those folks' heads who thought that four walls, spoon victuals and pickin' oakum till their fingers were flayed would make backsliders better. Prison, Karrie, and I don't mind who hears me say so, prison, Karrie, is a hell upon earth."

"There, there, Mr. Weedon, what's the use of dwellin' upon what's past and done? You did nothin' to be ashamed of."

"I shall never hold up my head again, Karrie, the spoon victuals and the oakum picking will stick to me as long as I live."

"That's random talk, Mr. Weedon, though I say so as shouldn't. I've naught else to say against Clem Fison, he's a good sort, but had no business to let a simple mawther like Martha Rose think that he was a-goin' to make a fine lady of her, and you only gave him his what for. All folks say as much and think the better, not the worse of you for so doin'. And now have another cupful of sop and I'll tell you a bit o' news."

Sam did as he was bidden, Mrs. Amos keeping him company. Then after a hearty smack of the lips, she continued:—

"Mr. Dan is a-goin' then to emigrate; you've heard tell o' old Mr. William Fison of Eye, who is worth a mint o' money, so they say. Well, the two young chaps never clung to each other as brothers should, especially those who have neither pa nor ma, and Mr. Dan was always forradest of the forrad, when they used to walk to the Ipswich grammar-school it was always Clem who had to carry the prog-basket and the umbrellas if it rained, and ever since they've been grown to man's estate Clem has been kept under. And now this piece o' work about Martha has so upset Mr. Dan that he's a-goin' to manage the old gentleman's farm t'other side o' Ipswich, and a good job, say I, for Saranne says that the two don't now so much as speak to one another. Much good it is for Mr. Paglar to preach about brethren dwellin' together in unity!"

Sam sipped his tea and swallowed his soaked bread without speaking. At last he said: "And I'm partly the

cause of this, Karrie, but I bear Clem Fison no malice."

"You needn't now," was the ready reply; "and If I was you, Mr. Weedon, if you're not above acceptin' a word of advice from a well-wisher, I'd think no more o' this business than of last year's wasp sting. Just change your clothes and afore coming to shock the sheaves after Jimmy and me, take a look round. If you find anything amiss I'd thank you to name it. I've done my uttermost but we're all given to stumblin' when put in authority."

Murmuring indistinct acknowledgments Sam then changed his dress, shaved himself and went abroad.

Was it possible that only two short weeks, fourteen days, had elapsed since last he moved amid familiar things? Months, years, an indefinite period, seemed to divide him from his pig-styes, neat-house, barn and stack-yard. So true it is that suffering has its own calendar, an almanac with which the seasons and starry revolutions have nothing to do!

CHAPTER XXX.

CLEM AMONG THE WINDFALLS.

NOT once had Dan visited the patient in his bed-chamber. When one by one Clem's nurses had been dismissed, and pale, attenuated and aged he came downstairs, the brothers did not so much as shake hands.

"We've pulled him nicely through," Dr. Cornelius had said to Dan on taking professional leave. "You have now no cause whatever for anxiety, sir; only," here the nameless doctor humm'd, ha'd and looked grave, "don't on any account let anybody or anything upset or bother him. Absolute quiet, Mr. Danvers, is here as usual the corroborant"—how he rolled out the word—"of the physician's work."

Fortunately harvest was now in full swing, and for the next three or four weeks Dan need not show his face on the Cornhill nor remain much indoors. Shocking the sheaves had hitherto been Clem's business; he would understand, Dan said to himself, why his elder sat down to meals in his shirt sleeves and had never a moment to spare.

Silence both found easy under the circumstances. Dan ever regarded wordy warfare as ungentlemanlike, and it was far better that experience should teach Clem what his folly had cost him.

But what would not Clem have given for courage

to blurt out: "Dan, old chap, let by-gones be, I'm as mad with myself as possible about this business."

But the saying of it! Once, twice, thrice he cleared his throat in vain, a glance at the other's set, severely arraigning features silenced him.

So day after day through the busy corn-cutting weeks, table-talk went little further than such phrases as these:—

"Ten acre field ready for carting to-morrow," Dan would say with almost a jubilant air. Did not every cleared field bring him nearer deliverance?

"I say—" Clem would answer, "I feel well enough now. I might just as well take a turn at the sheaves."

The proferred help being met with a contemptuous —"And the thermometer eighty in the shade? No, thank you, we don't want the house full of doctors and old women again."

For the most part, however, Dan exercised severe self-restraint, checking unpalatable suggestions and avoiding painful topics. When harvest was over and Clem was himself again he would speak his mind and unfold his plans.

He little thought that Clem knew a good deal on the latter point already.

Most of us are shrewdness incarnate where self-love and self-interest are concerned, and no sooner was he downstairs again than Saranne's behaviour denoted coming surprise.

That elderly damsel enjoyed the conspicuous, the unique position of being Oxborrow's sole old maid. In those pre-emigration, pre-migration days, every lass hereabouts had her sweetheart, more often a choice of sweet-

hearts. But Saranne had hitherto boxed the ears of every swain venturing upon sending her a valentine or suggesting a Sunday stroll. Truth to tell, there were privileges Saranne valued more than "nannickin' with the bors," and being asked in church. Good wages, the prospect of a rise, a position of trust more than made up for what in homely phrase was styled, "a good tight smack," that is to say, a resounding kiss. Kisses enough might the invaluable young woman have enjoyed had she been in the mind, but Saranne's affections were set upon material things. Already nigh upon fifteen pound, as she put it, she had to her name, and over-reaching ambition evoked dreams of many fifteens more.

Dan's engagement to a boarding-school miss had not greatly interfered with these aspirations. Married or single Mr. Dan must have someone who had a light hand with the butter, could milk a cow, brew, bake, pickle hams and make damson cheese. But if only Mr. Clem would take a farm and a wife!

"I've no fault to find with master," she would say; "but the pair on 'em, lor bless you, one is no more like t'other than chalk is like cheese! Many's the time Mr. Clem has had his tea in the kitchen to save trouble when coming late home from market, but Mr. Dan is that high and mighty, you'd think he came to the birth in a gig—and a brand new one too!"

Saranne could see through a brick wall as well as most folks, and putting two and two, four and four and eight and eight together she soon arrived at a conclusion. Something was up, that something the consummation of

her fondest wishes—Mr. Dan was going away for good, leaving his brother in possession.

"Why, what on earth are you so pleased about, Saranne?" Clem asked one day. Dan's taciturnity was sometimes more than he could bear. "You don't seem to know," he added, "whether you stand on your head or your heels."

"You speak the truth there, Mr. Clem—I don't know, but it's not for me to say why."

By little and little the secret was wormed out. Saranne had heard Mr. Ephraim and Mr. Dan say this, that and the other when he lay sick abed; letters bearing the Eye post-mark had been frequent, what was more, Mr. Dan's engagement with Miss Atwell had been broken off, she had heard Mr. Dan tell his uncle so at the tea-table.

"May-hap with meanin', Mr. Clem," Saranne continued, "so that I might relate it to you. I'm not one o' the keyhole, pryin' sort, as you know, but I can't put waddin' in my ears out o' season, and Mr. Dan couldn't have spoken plainer had he been parish clerk reading the answers in church; he said, said he, I was that struck of a heap that I almost dropped my waiter, beer, ham and all, for he said, said he——"

Clem was himself too much struck of a heap to follow the windings of the rigmarole that followed. Things had been brought to this pass then, and by his own blockishness! What wonder that he was hateful in Dan's eyes?

A few days later, Clem now being himself again, Dan began to speak of the future, characteristically

ısing unanswerable speech, sharp little sentences preıluding discussion or even reply.

"You're all right now, I suppose?" he asked, as the pair sat down to their long, many-coursed tea.

"Yes, I'm out of the wood at last," Clem replied.

"That's lucky, as you'll soon have plenty to think about. You may as well know, if you haven't guessed it, that I've made up my mind to clear out. The day after to-morrow I'm off to Eye for good."

Clem listened conscience-stricken.

"I shouldn't have stayed here after what has happened, anyhow; I'd sooner by half try sheep farming in New Zealand. Uncle William's offer suits me to a T."

"I say, old fellow——" began Clem, his heart swelling as he heard.

Cruelly the other cut him short.

"Oh! of course you're sorry and the rest of it, much good will that do! I was at Willis's yesterday" (Willis & Co. were Mr. Atwell's employers) "they'll answer any questions you feel inclined to make——"

"Dan——" again put in Clem, again meeting with rebuff.

"Everything is settled, I tell you," Dan retorted. "Why need we bother ourselves? And these figures must be looked over before paying the men. Please don't talk to me just now."

There explanation began and ended. During the next forty-eight hours Clem made more than one attempt to get in a palinode, Dan of set purpose stopping him. Not that he feared a fit of softness or dreaded emotion on his own part. Dan simply wished and in-

tended to show his brother that all was over between them. Nothing could make things as they had once been. The pair interchanged commonplaces at table, a semblance of good understanding was kept up, but the least perspicacious observer must have seen how matters stood. Many and oft-renewed were Saranne's tirades poured out to that safe confidant, the pump.

Those forty-eight hours Clem would never forget as long as he lived. To the last he hoped for an opportunity of speaking out; surely, oh! surely, Dan would not go away without a handshake and friendly word?

Cool as a cucumber Dan sat down to what he determined should be his last meal in the old home. With apparently the best possible appetite he degustated his pile of thick dry toast and home-cured ham. Poor Clem, as Saranne tearfully informed the pump, "pingling his egg and thin bread and butter, for all the world as when as a boy he had not done his sums and expected a hiding at school."

Breakfast over Clem followed his brother about like a dog, Dan pretending not to hear the hesitating: "I say, old chap," or "Come, Dan," the other got out, he hardly knew how.

An hour later the gig was brought round, and with a careless "Good-bye" and a wave of the hand Dan drove off.

Sick at heart Clem took a turn in the orchard where he was sure of being alone.

It was a typical August day. Against the warm blue sky lay masses of dazzling cumuli, now solid looking as snow-capped peaks, now majestically breaking up, letting fall broad purple shadows on the pale yellow stubble.

A delightful breeze stirred the fruit trees from time to time, bringing down over-ripe pear or plum. Willow-herb made the hedges bright with their handsome carmine flowers, plum-pudding children called it here, likening its fragrance to that of the Christmas dainty. His hands thrust in his pockets, Clem sauntered listlessly along, pausing as he reached a certain tree on rising ground. It was a veteran bearing early pears, not especially choice of flavour but sweet, juicy and of a most engaging pink and orange outside. As he lingered under its rustling shade down dropped a pear at his feet, the incident, trifling as it was, making his cup of bitterness overflow. How well he remembered many a boyish scramble for such windfalls long ago! Those pears ripened during wheat harvest, which was holiday time, and in gusty weather Dan and himself would rush out after dinner, often tumbling over each other in their eagerness to seize a fallen prize.

Seldom had they quarelled in those early days. Dan's seniority and consequent assumption of command awing the younger. As Clem now dwelt on early scenes he only recalled the pleasantness and the affection; how with arms entwined they had munched their pink and orange windfalls, pouring out brotherly confidences, talking grandiosely as boys will of what they should do when grown to men. Could it be true? Was this dreadful separation no mere nightmare, but hard fact and of his own bringing about?

In his present mood Clem clung to his brother, yearned for him as for a lost half of himself. He did not dwell upon his love for Martha, or upon the wrong he had done her and the cost to them both. He could

only think of his proud elder, whose fortunes he had marred and whose pride he had humbled. Dan would never forgive him, he now said to himself, never, never. They would meet from time to time, but no more with outstretched hand and responsive glance. There are injuries that men of Dan's calibre cannot overlook and this mortification was one.

If the comprehension of absolute justice in the abstract is one of the rarest with which human beings are endowed, almost as rare is the faculty of accurately measuring our own share of moral responsibility in every day imbroglios. As will ever be the case with vacillating natures, Clem incorrectly made out the debit and credit of this account. In his eyes he was the only culprit, Dan the only victim.

Another luscious windfall dropped at his feet, and being thirsty he raised it to his lips, the next moment throwing it down as if he had discovered a wasp at the core.

A wasp lay there, indeed, its sting bringing something much worse than bodily smart. Tears of anguish rushed to Clem's eyes as he recalled the old happy days when brotherly differences had lasted but an hour, when Dan's masterful, "I'm the eldest, you know," had only awakened passing resentment.

Long he wept at the foot of that old pear-tree, windfall after windfall with gentle thud bringing back a vanished passed. Strange, inexplicable, it seemed to him, that boys who had grown up together, children of the same father and mother, could be separated thus, become to each other as strangers!

CHAPTER XXXI.

AULD ROBIN GRAY.

ONCE more Orion dwarfed the splendours of the eastern arc, once more high above, gleamed the Pleiades, a tassel of pearls, and crowning these like a globe of tourmaline shone the fiery Aldebaran.

A land of flowers and verdure, Suffolk was not favoured with regard to climate. Already by the end of November winter had set in with almost Arctic rigour. Over the wide, frost-bound fallow swept a rasping wind; in the cold grey dawn might be heard near every farm-house the ploughman's hatchet, so thick being the ice that daily openings had to be made before the horses could drink; stockmen blew on their fingers, as with horn lanterns they fetched corn from the granary or provender from the chaff-house.

Certain signs announced the approach of Christmas somewhat whimsically. Orion did not more regularly appear above the Oriental horizon, that pearly tassel called the Pleiades did not more surely gleam higher up, the ruby of rubies called Aldebaran showed no greater punctuality than Mr. Paglar's unorthodox parishioners now. By the time wheat-sowing was well advanced the church rapidly filled, on the Sunday or two preceding the distribution of charity coals, beef and flannel, the

entire parish was there, as if by magic every meetener or meeting-house goer in the place had renounced the error of his ways, for the nonce Methodism seemed non-existent, not a stray sheep but had been gathered to the pastoral fold!

The rector knew well enough that such recantation could be but skin-deep. Had his spouse's will been law, the time-servers, one and all, wolves in sheep's clothing, she called them, would have gone without Christmas doles. Fortunately the benefactions dating from King Edward the Sixth's time had been protected against clerical intolerance. It was stipulated in the deed that two laymen, one of these a church-warden, must supervise the annual distribution, and Mr. Paglar good naturedly accepted the inevitable. He would even joke about the matter and declare that Methodistical loaves and fishes would have precisely the same effect on his own flock. "And after all," he would say to his fellow-clerics, "it's mighty pleasant to see the church decently filled at least once or twice during the year!"

As a rule farming folks took small account of weather and seasons, except as they affected out-of-door operations. But this winter Sam Weedon found the long dark evenings unbearable. Long in the accepted sense they could hardly be called. Soon after eight o'clock the trio would take their chamber lanterns, a rushlight enclosed in perforated tin, and hie off to bed. Formerly Sam would doze after tea over the weekly paper, his sole literature, or would chat with Mrs. Amos by the kitchen fire. The *Ipswich Journal* no longer interested him, and since coming out of prison he had held aloof

from the kitchen. Between tea and bed-time the hour and a half dragged wearily. He would sit in his elbow-chair thinking, thinking. One evening to Mrs. Amos's astoundment he put on his great-coat, wrapped a muffler around his throat, took up his gig umbrella and made for the backhouse door.

"You're never a-settin' foot abroad, Mr. Weedon," she burst out, "the trees copped* with snow and a sight deal more comin' afore night, I lay."

"I've an errand but shan't be long," Sam replied, edging past her and determined to hear no more.

Through the heavy roads he made what haste he could, fitful snow-falls powdering his covercoat, an ice-cold excoriating wind in his face. Stolidly he plodded through drift and cart-tracks, never pausing till he reached the fish-salesman's door.

The rap of his crome stick was answered by Martha, looking sad perhaps, but to his thinking sweeter than ever.

"If it isn't Mr. Weedon, uncle!" she cried.

"As if I didn't know his knock among a score!" the old man exclaimed testily, he often lost patience with Martha now.

"How kind of you to come and see uncle in the snow," she added, throwing wide the door.

"Nay, I'm come to see you as well to-night, my dear," Sam got out bravely, as he shook first one foot, then the other over the scraper.

"And kindly welcome you are, Mr. Weedon; I was just a-talkin' about you, and sayin' as how you'd over-

* E. A., topped, heaped up.

looked us of late," said the preacher. "But come inside, never mind your highlows, just slip 'em off."

Sam saw with satisfaction that Adah was not by. Hanging up his hat and coat and taking a chair he began, his eyes following Martha:—

"If I must speak the truth, Master Rose, I'm a bit shy about showin' my face anywhere. I'm broke, that's the long and short of it. I sit alone yonder ruminatin' like Job among the potsherds."

"Sam Weedon," began the preacher, "there you're wrong. I'm not one of those who preach the Gospel out of season, but take a well-wisher's advice and don't ruminate on what is past and done. Dwell on the bountiful dispensations the Almighty may have in store for all of us, repentant sinners."

"That's what I was veerin' round to, Master Rose," Sam continued, his gaze pursuing Martha as needle the magnet. "A man can't chirp by his fireside like a cricket, and I don't know how it is, I never before felt so lonesome as I've done of late, hearin' the wood a-cracklin' on the fire and the wind a-sighin' outside night after night. But there's one who could make it different and she knows it."

Meantime Martha had been putting elderberry wine on the hob and getting out some gingerbread nuts, a seasonable refection. Folks all made elderberry wine hereabouts, which heated and spiced was offered with the above-mentioned adjunct on winter evenings. As she placed a tumblerful before him the plump little hand did not tremble, and she drew back quickly, Sam noticing every movement.

"You speak the truth there, Mr. Weedon, but it isn't

only in the Interpreter's house and with regard to heavenly things that folks chose the muck-rake and leave the golden crown——"

"Uncle!" exclaimed Martha colouring.

"I'm only sayin' what is just, Martha, I know whom you're thinkin' on when you sigh over your sewin', and you don't mean to tell me that you're as ignorant as a new-born babe of Sam Weedon's intentions; he's the last man livin' to say one thing and mean another."

"That I am, Master Rose, though I say it who shouldn't, and if so be that Martha will go to church with me, she's only to name the day, and when that rip Adah marries the chap she walks with, you'll be welcome to a bed and board with us as the flowers in May."

"No, no, Mr. Weedon, whatever befalls, I won't be that beholden to you; and it's her, I'm thinkin' on, how from mornin' to night she stitches her finger to the bone, when she might have a good home of her own——"

"Uncle," Martha cried with flaming cheeks, "would you have me put on what I can't feel? I thank you kindly, Mr. Weedon, but I can't act a two-faced part——" then she stopped short, looking ready to cry.

"Martha Rose," Sam began, the tumblerful of hot elderberry wine having imparted courage, "let us try to come to an understandin'; you're now pullin' one way and I another, but there's no reason why we shouldn't pull together. I've never been the sort o' chap that mawthers run after, and I'm not so young as I was, but if you'll take me, my dear, there isn't a thing you'd set your heart on that I wouldn't strive to give you, and so long as you don't repine, I'll ask no more."

"Well spoken, Sam Weedon," interposed the blind

listener, "and if you again say him nay, Martha, you'll not only stand in your own light but show yourself to be the most ungratefulest girl goin'."

"I know it," pleaded Martha desperately. "It's that that cuts, uncle. There's nothing I wouldn't do for Mr. Weedon, nothing in the wide world, but I can't marry him."

A sudden thought seemed to flash across Sam's mind. With a hasty ejaculation he sprang from his seat and tugged at his great-coat.

"I see how it is; I might have thought on it afore," he said in a tone of profound depression. "What girl, indeed, who looks up to herself would take a jail-bird like me?"

He moved hastily towards the door, but Martha barred the way. It was not painful self-defence that now made her face eloquent and her voice imperious, instead passionate pity and a newly awakened sense of indebtedness. There was also something else in her tone, an impersonal note, an aspiration after generous surrender.

"Do not say that, Mr. Weedon, it is not true! My love was given long ago to another, you know it, and uncle too. Take me without if you will——"

With a little sob she added, "and I only wish I were half good enough for you."

Sam did not catch her in his arms, he was far too timid and too much overcome for such demonstrativeness. Sinking back in his chair, closing his eyes, he could only get out:—

"Not the last words but those that came afore, say'em over again, my dear; let 'em buzz in my ears."

For the life of her Martha could not have obeyed his behest. Fortunately Master Rose intervened.

"Nay, it's a-humblin' herself that would be most becomin', Sam; though proud as a peacock you ought to be, Martha, that the like o' Sam Weedon would so much as look at you after what's happened. And little did I think that flesh and blood o' mine would ever ride in a gig. But be not lifted up, Martha; when thou hast enough, remember the time of hunger; and when thou art rich, think upon poverty and need."

"There, there, I'm not so rich as that, neither, Master Rose," the other put in, despite his emotion tickled with the compliment. "If, though I say it who shouldn't, it's a bit of a lift for Martha, it's a sight deal more than that to me——" then he stopped short, eyeing her wistfully, longing but not daring to use a lover's privilege and kiss her soft cheek.

"Fetch pipes and tobacco, Martha," said the blind man. "Though I thought that like Mercy on her way to the Celestial City you would one day find out the difference between Mr. Brisk and a true well-wisher I'm too much struck of a heap to do aught but ponder, and I shouldn't be surprised if Sam feels similar."

"Don't ask me how I feel, Master Rose," replied Sam. "A draw will bring us both round a bit, I daresay; and if I might be so bold, move your chair nearer my way, Martha."

Their pipes lit, the two men puffed away without speaking, only from time to time breathing deep-drawn sighs of contentment. At last after much fidgeting Sam did catch one soft little hand and hold it fast in his big brawny paw.

Then his features grew radiant, and perhaps for the first time in his life he experienced devotional rapture, as at blind Rose's bidding all three fell on their knees, thanking God who had given them "a day of rejoicing and a good day."

The blind preacher's prayers were always long, and it was just upon eleven o'clock, a late hour in these parts, when Sam unlatched his garden gate.

CHAPTER XXXII.

"I GA'ED HIM ANE KISS AND BADE HIM GANG AWAY."

THE brief, prelusive winter had passed. Over the umbered fields, but yesterday sheets of asbestine, now bent a pale blue sky, mild sunshine illumed the level landscape; on every hedge, its breast glowing like a ripe biffin, perched the untiring songster "that loveth to maintain a kind of sociableness with men."

Alike farmers and labouring folks rejoiced in the change, for wheat-sowing, the great business of the year, engrossed all thoughts. They no longer "put the dibble in earth" after Perdita's method, although only lately superseded by the time-saving drill. A few years before, on every fallow might have been seen that primitive procession, the dibbler, ambidextrous and walking backwards like a crab; women or maybe boys following him, carefully dropping seed into the two rows of holes made by his implements. Later in the day came harrowers covering the precious deposit with earth. Dibbling was farmed, that is to say, the dibbler found his droppers and was paid by the piece, an expert hand getting over an acre during the day. Not without anathemas, therefore, had the more expeditious mechanical drill been introduced on occupations alike big and little. To be behind with one's wheat-sowing was to dub oneself a

bad farmer, and no sooner had a thaw set in than drillers were at work, contented as were their employers that the weather had changed, but testifying no exhilaration. Those stolid Suffolkers would occasionally talk to their horses, sometimes, although rarely, whistle as they went for want of thought. Never would you hear a song as ploughs, harrow or roller were driven backwards and forwards.

Did content of mind depend upon the reasoning faculty, Martha Rose should have set off for Ipswich with a light heart. Instead of going in quest of needlework she was bound upon a bridal errand, bidden to spend no less a sum than five pounds upon her wedding bonnet, shawl and gown, and general rig out, as Sam called it.

"Say nought about it, my dear," he had whispered, as he put into her hand what to Martha, and to himself also, was a lordly gift. "Just slip off by yourself and I'll overtake you with my gig on the way home."

What, indeed, did not this marriage mean? Those hardest of all reproaches, the reproaches that remain unspoken, could no longer cut to the heart. At the same time she was making peace with herself, discharging a moral obligation. And last, but not least, she was ending a hard struggle for daily bread. For, although Sam Weedon was a three-horse farmer, occupying only fifty acres of poorish land, everyone knew that he contrived to save money. As his wife, moreover, she would be hardly less raised in the social scale than had she married Clem Fison himself. That foolish ambition of driving to market in her husband's gig would now be realised. At church she should have her own pew im-

mediately behind those of squire, retired folks and the larger farmers. In fact, the prospect of becoming Mrs. Samuel Weedon ought to have been quite a dazzling one to a young woman in her position.

But Martha's step dragged heavily. Neither blue sky, nor mild sunshine, nor robin's song imparted cheerfulness. Instead of awakening pleasurable anticipation the five gold pieces in her pocket seemed mere weights, deadening handicaps alike on heart and conscience. If she was repaying Sam's devotion, she was undertaking duties she should never be able to perform, marrying a man not for himself but for what he possessed.

"Oh! Clem, Clem!" she said to herself, "if only you had never thought of me at all, never laid a posy on the schoolroom window." Her reverie was disturbed by a familiar voice.

Forcing his way through the hedge opposite, Clem sprang to her side, and agitated, taken aback although she was, she recognised the Clem of former days. He was himself again, she was his only dear, no longer, alas! to be separated from him by death alone!

"Martha!" he said, coming close to her. In other respects the young farmer was greatly changed. With a look of former boyishness and happy unconcern, had vanished an expression of wavering purpose and self-depreciation. Bitter lessons had borne their fruit. A strong man Clem Fison would never be, but he had learned to take counsel of himself, that mightiest of all experiences, "that a man's mind is wont to tell him more than seven watchmen that sit above in a high tower." "Martha!" he began and would have taken her hand.

"Mr. Clem!" she cried in great distress, "do not look at me, do not speak to me, you mustn't really."

So saying, or rather sobbing out the words, she would fain have hastened on, but he stood in her way.

"There is nothing like being brought to death's door to make a fellow see himself as he is, Martha. I've been on the look out for you ever since I got abroad again. Say that you don't want a long story, that you know all I have on my mind and forgive."

"If so be that you ever cared for me let me go, Mr. Clem. It isn't that I bear you any malice, but your situation is changed and mine likewise——"

"If folks say that I'm going to marry that boarding school miss from Ipswich they don't know what they are talking about, Martha, that's all. I'm my own master at last. My situation is changed, you are right there, but don't look me in the face and say, 'I never cared for you, Clem, and I'm going to marry somebody else.' I shouldn't believe you if you did, and I only want one word, one little word from you. The banns, the banns, for you to fix the day, to mark it here——" out he whipped his little Pawsey's pocket-book and tried to press a pencil between her fingers; both dropped, and edging by him she whispered, the words seemed too hateful for utterance:—

"They'll be given out a week come Sunday, Mr. Clem, my banns and Mr. Weedon's I mean; I'd liefer a thousand times it were my passing bell, but it can't be helped now. I hope——"

She could not finish with the words—"that you will be happy."

Utterly taken aback, chop-fallen indeed, Clem could

only meet her gaze wistfully, imploring not a word of hope but of comfort; that yearning look she understood but too well. Bending forward, she dropped a kiss on his lips, a kiss that showed in one, the supreme sense, she was his still. Then brushing away her tears she hasted forward. Almost reeling under the blow Clem paused for a moment, after a while he also continuing his way.

It was not only heart-breaking disappointment that now rendered his countenance dark and his step heavy. What bowed him to the earth was a sense of shame and of the retribution that dogs the crooked path.

This shattering of his fondest hopes had been brought about by his own instability and shiftiness. No one else, not even Dan, was here to blame. The meaning of blind Rose's favourite proverb came forcibly home. Every vat must stand on its own bottom.

As his ill luck would have it a little later in the day he met Sam Weedon driving quickly towards Ipswich, his horse well groomed, his gig cleaned, himself wearing Sunday's surtout and black satin stock, his air, subdued although it was, unmistakably that of the bridegroom elect. The pair had made up their quarrel long before. It was not in Sam's nature to bear malice, or in Clem's either, but nothing to-day could have been more unwelcome than such a rencounter. And, tactless as are some of nature's noblemen, Sam must perforce pull up.

"Day, Mr. Fison," he began, since Dan's disappearance Clem was styled as his elder brother had been. "Day, to you. And I've a bit of news——" Sam's eyes did not twinkle as was usually the case when about to impart the unexpected. There was no loverlike

triumph, no assumption of magnanimity as he added: "It's I who am going to give that poor little mawther a home, so you needn't harp on what is over and done any longer. She won't be looked down upon by my relations as she would have been by yours, and a young spark like you should look higher."

Clem did his best to steady his voice.

"My hand, old chap, I wish you both——" he began.

"Yes, yes, I understand; I was sure I should have your good wishes," Sam rejoined, now hardly less master of himself than the other. "I thought I'd be the first to tell you, that's all. Well, is your wheat all in?"

"All but the ten-acre field; the fact is I'm a little behind this year," Clem replied, now somewhat recovering composure.

"And so am I; after all that's said and done these new-fangled drills don't beat the dibble. But a sight deal of use sowing corn at all if we're to have what's called free trade. You know Mrs. Crisp, the widow who occupies what's called Long Lane Farm? She said to me the other day, said she, 'If that scoundrel Sir Robert Peel takes the duty off wheat he deserves to be dragged to the grave by hopping toads.' Day, day, Mr. Fison."

And Sam drove off laughing at what he regarded as Attic salt on Widow Crisp's part.

Just in their dealings, for the most part benevolently disposed, tenant farmers were perhaps as uneducated, politically speaking, as their three-quarter men, hudderens and baccus boys. Few, indeed, possessed wider mental standards than Sam Weedon. The pivot on which all

things hung, as the sun to the solar system, as gravity to cosmical unity, in their eyes was the duty on corn; that duty taken off, the social fabric would fall to pieces. "Rule Britannia" and "God save the Queen" would have no sort of meaning. England would fall, and fall like Lucifer never to rise again.

Clem's intellectual horizon did not overtop his neighbours', but he had other things besides Sir Robert Peel and the corn laws to think of just then. What appalled him was a feeling of overweening loneliness. Left motherless in his childhood, neither sister nor girl cousin shedding feminine influences over his home, early affection had centred in his brother. And not only was his brother lost to him but the only woman whose love he had known! But for Sam's sake he could have wished that well-deserved blow had proved fatal. As one in a dream he went through the day's routine, every task proving burdensome, no sign of prosperity affording comfort. So desolate he felt, so much did he crave sympathy, that again and again he began a more than conciliatory letter to Dan, again and again tearing the ill-spelt, ill-constructed missive to bits.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE BANNS.

IT was Sunday morning and Martha sat alone in the little sanded kitchen, on her knees a Sunday book bearing this inscription:—

Martha Rose is my name,
England is my nation,
Burridge is my dwelling-place
And Christ is my salvation.

This quotation did duty for an *ex libris* in country places and underneath was written, as custom also ordained:—

Steal not this book, my worthy friend,
For fear the gallows should be your end,
And if this book you take away,
You'll rue it on the Judgment Day.

Martha had opened her favourite volume and closed it sadly, quite unable to enter into its spirit to-day. Neither familiar sentences nor quaint gays could fix her attention. Her thoughts dwelt upon a courtship very different to that of "the youngest of the three daughters of the gentleman whose family this book began with,"

and which ended so happily. The very illustrations had seemed a reproach. That heroine in short sleeves, low-necked body and skirt beginning from the arm-pits, that bridegroom in small clothes, swallow-tailed coat and waistcoat reaching to the knee, were thrice enviable. They married simply and solely because they were all in all to each other.

The old fish-salesman was preaching in a room lent for the purpose at Tuddinghame, three quarters of a mile off. Almost beside herself with delight Adah had started for church. Martha's approaching marriage had been kept a profound secret, and she gloried in the anticipated astonishment of the neighbours.

"To-day here, next Sunday at Oxborrow, Sunday fortnight here again, I'll hear your banns published every time, Martha, and nothing shall hinder me. Lor!" she rattled on, "if I stood in your shoes and were going to drive to market in a gig and wear a silk gown o' Sundays all my days, I should be ready to jump out of my skin, but there's no satisfyin' some folks, you look as peakish as a chicken that's got the pip."

Tossing her head, mincing her steps, of set purpose catching every eye, the giglet set off. Just below she was rejoined by her boon companion Triffie. In high glee the pair descended the village street, Martha's eyes following them wistfully. The first bell had ceased, the tolling-in now sounded, each stroke falling on her ear as the knell of destiny. Until the very last she could hardly believe that it was true, that this morning her all hoping against hope would end, another half-hour and she should be as good as married to a man she could

not love. The longer she considered the matter the more blamable seemed her own weakness. Her artless nature shrank from loveless wedlock as from the woman's last forfeiture. All the more did she shrink from it since that last meeting with Clem. Was she not his entirely? Did she not think of him by day and dream of him by night? Did not his merest handclasp, glance, greeting, move her strangely and with mystic troublous joy? And this being so, what right had she to touch another man's money, to accept his kindnesses, to enter upon a compact the very thought of which made her tremble?

The tolling bell ceased, and she looked at the clock, wondering how the time would be got through till Adah's return. Mr. Shafto's service was of maximum length, including the Communion, the Litany and a sermon generally lasting three-quarters of an hour. A briefer discourse in those days would perhaps have seemed a grievance, even an injustice to some folks, but most rejoiced when the prayer of St. Chrysostom and the verse from Corinthians brought matters to a close. It was now eleven o'clock, and Adah could not be back till a few minutes before one.

"And as if it signified a pin!" mused Martha. "What's done can't be undone, and had she stayed away the banns would be read all the same!"

She fretted and fumed nevertheless, hoping that assurance would bring relief, that when once Adah was back with the news she should feel more composed. Sam would call in the evening, she must try and receive him more cheerfully than on the occasion of his last visit a

few days before. Self-reproach now took quite another turn. Thinking of the farmer and summing up his actions; from first to last, so straightforward, so generous, so manly, she wondered at her own ingratitude.

"Oh!" she thought, "I will not vex him by looking dumpish any more; I will try to do my duty by Sam Weedon and put Clem out of my thoughts. Uncle Jethro is right, I'm the most ungratefulest mawther to be found if you were to scour the country." She threw down her book and looked round for something to do, no easy matter on a Sunday! the blind man was a strict Sabbatarian, on the Lord's Day no victuals must be cooked, no brushes or brooms used. A fire was lighted in the big old-fashioned grate, beds were made and chambers tidied, here the day's work began and ended.

Of one permissible job she luckily bethought herself. On the sill of the low diagonal-paned window stood geraniums which might now be watered, the frost having disappeared. Fetching a jugful of water from the pump she gently refreshed one plant after another, as she did so wetting her fingers.

In taking out her handkerchief to use as a towel she touched a letter that had been pocketed unread, intact, several days before, a letter from Clem sent openly by the letter-carrier. Fortunately no one was in the secret, the missive being tossed through the kitchen door as she swept it alone. What right had Clem to write to her? What business had she with his, with any man's *billet doux* now? the letter should be burnt on the first opportunity.

Opportunities came and went, but her purpose remained unfulfilled. She would kneel by the fire, even hold her letter to the bars, but without courage for the sacrifice. To-day, however, it should be made.

The decision was just arrived at when only an hour after her departure Adah burst open the door.

Blozzed, breathless, speechless she threw herself into a chair, rocking herself to and fro, crying one moment, laughing the next.

"How could you, how dared you?" at last she got out; "I'll never forgive you for making a fool of me, never, never! I thought I should have had a fit in church and tore out as if a mad bull was at my heels."

"The banns, the banns?" was all Martha could say with white lips. So taken aback was she that she forgot to hide her letter. What could Adah's discomfiture mean but one thing? At the eleventh hour Sam had read her inmost thoughts. Divining that he should never be able to make her happy he had stopped the banns!

"Now, don't try to get over me like that; don't look as innocent as a chick half out of the shell!" Adah exclaimed, still beside herself with anger and mortification. "And I shouldn't like to stand in your shoes when uncle Jethro comes in; he'll be ready to turn you out of house and home and no wonder——"

No less agitated was Martha now.

"The—banns—were—not—published—after—all?" she gasped, her knees trembling under her.

"Banns indeed! you ought to be ashamed of yourself, Martha, acting that paltry by Sam Weedon. If I

hadn't walked with Jerry Codd these two months I'd take the old chap myself, I declare I would!"

Martha was not of the fainting sort, but alike physical endurance and self-possession gave way now. Staggering as she moved, she caught hold of a chair and but for Adah's muscular arm would have fallen. Putting one hand to her heart she murmured a faint "Thank God."

The life-long falsity, then, was spared her, she was not to spend her years by one man's side, all the while loving another. To her unsophisticated nature she seemed withheld from degradation of deepest dye.

"There, perk up, do," Adah said, administering water and smelling salts. "You ought to stand on your head since you've got the one you've been cryin' your eyes out for. But why have both on you made April fools of us all? You should have seen how folks looked when Mr. Shafto read out—'I publish the banns of marriage between Clement Fison and Martha Rose——'"

When Martha recovered herself she found Adah standing over her with an open letter in hand, that secretly hoarded missive now for the first time unwafered and read.

"Humph!" cried the young woman, coolly reperusing Clem's ill-spelt, ill-worded epistle. "Here's a pretty kettle of fish! You might just as well have read what the postman brought you, Martha; he doesn't knock at this here door every day. Well, now we know why Sam looked so down in the mouth t'other day, and of course it was Clem's business to hand in the banns not yours——"

"The letter, let me read the letter, Adah——"

"Lor! as if you could tell which is top or bottom, head or tail in the fluster you are in; but here it is. Well, I'm glad you're a-goin' to be made a lady of, Martha; I only hope you won't look down on your own flesh and blood, that's all."

Rigmarolish enough was Clem's account of what had passed between himself and his rival.

"Sam wanted to make a clean breast of it," he wrote, "and so did Clem Fison, but neither of us could come up to the scratch; Sam couldn't face the old gentleman your uncle and that rip Adah, and I'd as lief have put my head in a skep of bees. So he said, said he, 'Don't let us kick up a bobbery about it, you're a good scholar, Mr. Clem, so sit down and indite a letter, saying that I've found out I'm not the man for her and another is, no need to mention names, and better to find this out before the knot is tied than after, and as the banns haven't been published, and nothing has been said about them to nobody, no harm is done, and folks can't say as how it was to have been otherwise on Sunday.'"

Then assuring her that she was as ever his only dear till death should them part, he begged her not to write, no news was good news, much better that folks should learn their own in church next Sunday, and the next day he would turn up at Burridge.

Thus, indeed, it came about. Sam had chosen the better part, accepted a noble forfeit; in his case as in many another reward being benison of conscience only. Martha Rose and Clem Fison, this also an every-day happening, attained their hearts' desire through self-sacrifice they could not in the very least measure. And

often and often as years went on Martha would allude to that Sunday of Sundays, perhaps unconsciously citing an Immortal:—

"Yes, Clem dear, I felt ready to drop at the time, and I was very sorry for Sam Weedon, but it was a very comfortable surprise."

THE END.

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Aguilar, Grace, † 1847.

Home Influence 2 v. — The Mother's Recompense 2 v.

Aïdé, Hamilton.

Rita 1 v. — Carr of Carrlyon 2 v. — The Marstons 2 v. — In that State of Life 1 v. — Morals and Mysteries 1 v. — Penruddocke 2 v. — "A nine Days' Wonder" 1 v. — Poet and Peer 2 v. — Introduced to Society 1 v.

Ainsworth, W. Harrison, † 1882.

Windsor Castle 1 v. — Saint James's 1 v. — Jack Sheppard (with Portrait) 1 v. — The Lancashire Witches 2 v. — The Star-Chamber 2 v. — The Flitch of Bacon 1 v. — The Spendthrift 1 v. — Mervyn Clitheroe 2 v. — Ovingdean Grange 1 v. — The Constable of the Tower 1 v. — The Lord Mayor of London 2 v. — Cardinal Pole 2 v. — John Law 2 v. — The Spanish Match 2 v. — The Constable de Bourbon 2 v. — Old Court 2 v. — Myddleton Pomfret 2 v. — The South-Sea Bubble 2 v. — *Hilary* St. Ives 2 v. — Talbot Harland 1 v. — Tower Hill 1 v. — Boscobel 2 v. — *The Good* Old Times 2 v. — Merry England 2 v. — The Goldsmith's Wife 2 v. — Preston Fight 2 v. — Chetwynd Calverley 2 v. — The Leaguer of Lathom 2 v. — The Fall of Somerset 2 v. — Beatrice Tyldesley 2 v. — Beau Nash 2 v. — Stanley Brereton 2 v.

Alcott, Louisa M. (Am.), † 1888.

Little Women 2 v. — Little Men 1 v. — An Old-Fashioned Girl 1 v. — Jo's Boys 1 v.

Aldrich, Thomas Bailey (Am.).

Marjorie Daw and other Tales 1 v. — The Stillwater Tragedy 1 v.

Alexander, Mrs. (Hector), † 1902.

A Second Life 3 v. — By Woman's Wit 1 v. — Mona's Choice 2 v. — A Life Interest 2 v. — A Crooked Path 2 v. — Blind Fate 2 v. — A Woman's Heart 2 v. — For His Sake 2 v. — The Snare of the Fowler 2 v. — Found Wanting 2 v. — A Ward in Chancery 1 v. — A Choice of Evils 2 v. — A Fight with Fate 2 v. — A Winning Hazard 1 v. — A Golden Autumn 1 v. — Mrs. Crichton's Creditor 1 v. — Barbara, Lady's Maid and Peeress 1 v. — The Cost of Her Pride 2 v. — Brown, V. C. 1 v. — Through Fire to Fortune 1 v. — A Missing Hero 1 v. — The Yellow Fiend 1 v. — Stronger than Love 2 v. — Kitty Costello 1 v.

e, Grand-Duchess of Hesse, 1878.
to Her Majesty the Queen (with). With a Memoir by H. R. H. i Christian 2 v.

ridge, Lizzie.
: and Law 2 v. — The World she n 2 v.

n, Grant, † 1899.
)man who did 1 v.

l for Greed," Author of Baroness de Bury).
Greed 1 v. — Love the Avenger

tey, F. (Guthrie).
unt's Robe 2 v. — A Fallen Idol The Pariah 3 v. — The Talking and other Tales 1 v. — Voces *First and Second Series)* 1 v. — ss Bottle 1 v. — A Bayard from t v.

es, Mrs.: *vide* **Mrs. Hungerford.**

stocrats, the," Author of: *de* **Gertrude Atherton.**

old, Sir Edwin, † 1904.
it of Asia (with Portrait) 1 v.

old, Matthew, † 1888.
1 Criticism 2 v. — Essays in Criti- *cond Series)* 1 v.

rton, Gertrude Franklin m.).
n Wives and English Husbands he Californians 1 v. — Patience k and her Times 2 v. — Senator '. — The Doomswoman 1 v. — The its 1 v. — The Splendid Idle Forties he Conqueror 2 v. — A Daughter ne 1 v. — His Fortunate Grace, — The Valiant Runaways 1 v. — in the Fog, and Other Stories 1 v. ravelling Thirds (in Spain) 1 v.

ten, Jane, † 1817.
id Sensibility 1 v. — Mansfield '. — Pride *and Prejudice* 1 v. — *er Abbey, and Persuasion* 1 v. — '.

"Autobiography of Lutfullah," Author of: *vide* **E. B. Eastwick.**

Avebury, Lord: *vide* **Sir John Lubbock.**

Bagot, Richard.
A Roman Mystery 2 v. — Casting of Nets 2 v. — The Just and the Unjust 2 v. — Donna Diana 2 v. — Love's Proxy 1 v. — The Passport 2 v.

Baring-Gould, S.
Mehalah 1 v. — John Herring 2 v. — Court Royal 2 v.

Barker, Lady: *v.* **Lady Broome.**

Barrett, Frank.
The Smuggler's Secret 1 v. — Out of the Jaws of Death 2 v.

Barrie, J. M.
Sentimental Tommy 2 v. — Margaret Ogilvy 1 v. — Tommy and Grizel 2 v. — The Little White Bird 1 v.

"Bayle's Romance, Miss," Author of: *vide* **W. Fraser Rae.**

Baynes, Rev. Robert H.
Lyra Anglicana, Hymns and Sacred Songs 1 v.

Beaconsfield, Lord: *vide* **Disraeli.**

Beaumont, Averil (Mrs. Hunt).
Thornicroft's Model 2 v.

Bell, Currer (Charlotte Brontë— Mrs. Nicholls), † 1855.
Jane Eyre 2 v. — Shirley 2 v. — Villette 2 v. — The Professor 1 v.

Bell, Ellis & Acton (Emily, † 1848, and Anne, † 1849, Brontë).
Wuthering Heights, and Agnes Grey 2 v.

Bellamy, Edward (Am.), † 1898.
Looking Backward 1 v.

Benedict, Frank Lee (Am.).
St. Simon's Niece 2 v.

Bennett, Arnold.
The Grand Babylon Hotel 1 v. — The Gates of Wrath 1 v. — A Great Man 1 v. — Sacred and Profane Love 1 v.

Benson, E. F.
Dodo 1 v. — The Rubicon 1 v. — Scarlet and Hyssop 1 v. — The Book of Months 1 v. — The Relentless City 1 v. — Mammon & Co. 2 v. — The Challoners 1 v. — An Act in a Backwater 1 v. — The Image in the Sand 2 v. — The Angel of Pain 2 v.

Besant, Sir Walter, † 1901.
The Revolt of Man 1 v. — Dorothy Forster 2 v. — Children of Gibeon 2 v. — The World went very well then 2 v. — Katharine Regina 1 v. — Herr Paulus 2 v. — The Inner House 1 v. — The Bell of St. Paul's 2 v. — For Faith and Freedom 2 v. — Armorel of Lyonesse 2 v. — Verbena Camellia Stephanotis, etc. 1 v. — Beyond the Dreams of Avarice 2 v. — The Master Craftsman 2 v. — A Fountain Sealed 1 v. — The Orange Girl 2 v. — The Fourth Generation 1 v. — The Lady of Lynn 2 v.

Besant, Sir Walter, † 1901, & James Rice, † 1882.
The Golden Butterfly 2 v. — Ready-Money Mortiboy 2 v. — By Celia's Arbour 2 v.

Betham-Edwards, M.
The Sylvestres 1 v. — Felicia 2 v. — Brother Gabriel 2 v. — Forestalled 1 v. — Exchange no Robbery, and other Novelettes 1 v. — Disarmed 1 v. — Doctor Jacob 1 v. — Pearla 1 v. — Next of Kin Wanted 1 v. — The Parting of the Ways 1 v. — For One and the World 1 v. — The Romance of a French Parsonage 1 v. — France of To-day 1 v. — Two Aunts and a Nephew 1 v. — A Dream of Millions 1 v. — The Curb of Honour 1 v. — France of To-day (*Second Series*) 1 v. — A Romance of Dijon 1 v. — The Dream-Charlotte 1 v. — A Storm-Rent Sky 1 v. — Reminiscences 1 v. — The Lord of the Harvest 1 v. — Anglo-French Reminiscences, 1875—1899 1 v. — A Suffolk Courtship 1 v. — Mock Beggars' Hall 1 v. — East of Paris 1 v. — A Humble Lover 1 v. — Barham Brocklebank, M.D. 1 v.

Bierce, Ambrose (Am.).
In the Midst of Life 1 v.

Birchenough, Mabel C.
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Bisland, E.: *v.* **Rhoda Broughton.**

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Black, William, † 18
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"Black-Box Murde Author of.
The Black-Box Murder 1 v.

Blackmore, Richard D † 1900.
Alice Lorraine 2 v. — Mary — Christowell 2 v. — Tom 2 v. — Perlycross 2 v.

"Blackwood."
Tales from "Blackwood" (F 1 v. — Tales from "Blackwoo *Series)* 1 v.

Blagden, Isa, † 1873.
The Woman I loved, and who loved me; A Tuscan W

Blessington, Countes guerite Gardiner), †
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nces of Court and Diplomatic
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lon, Miss (Mrs. Maxwell).

lley's Secret 2 v. — Aurora
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Lady's Mile 2 v. — Rupert God-
- Dead-Sea Fruit 2 v. — Run to
. — Fenton's Quest 2 v. — The
Arden 2 v. — Strangers and
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the Flood 3 v. — Lost for Love
Strange World 2 v. — Hostages
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hua Haggard's Daughter 2 v. —
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Tales 1 v. — An Open Verdict
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ory of Barbara 2 v. — Just as I
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v. — Phantom Fortune 3 v. —
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d's Weird 3 v. — One Thing
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ie Day will come 2 v. — One
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tians 2 v. — All along the River
u art the Man 2 v. — The Christ-
lings, etc. 1 v. — Sons of Fire
idon Pride 2 v. — Rough Justice
High Places 2 v. — His Darling
- The Infidel 2 v. — The Conflict
ie Rose of Life 2 v.

ley, Lady, † 1887.

e in the "Sunbeam" 2 v. —
and Storm in the East 2 v. — In
s, the Tropics and the Roaring
v.

ad-Winners, the," Author
Am.).

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Harte: *vide* **Harte.**

Brock, Rev. William, † 1875.

Sir Henry Havelock, K. C. B. 1 v.

Brontë, Charlotte: *vide* **Currer Bell.**

Brontë, Emily & Anne: *vide* **Ellis & Acton Bell.**

Brooks, Shirley, † 1874.

The Silver Cord 3 v. — Sooner or Later 3 v.

Broome, Lady (Lady Barker).

Station Life in New Zealand 1 v. — Station Amusements in New Zealand 1 v. — A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa 1 v. — Letters to Guy, and A Distant Shore—Rodrigues 1 v. — Colonial Memories 1 v.

Broughton, Rhoda.

Cometh up as a Flower 1 v. — Not wisely, but too well 2 v. — Red as a Rose is She 2 v. — Tales for Christmas Eve 1 v. — Nancy 2 v. — Joan 2 v. — Second Thoughts 2 v. — Belinda 2 v. — Doctor Cupid 2 v. — Alas! 2 v. — Mrs. Bligh 1 v. — A Beginner 1 v. — Scylla or Charybdis? 1 v. — Dear Faustina 1 v. — The Game and the Candle 1 v. — Foes in Law 1 v. — Lavinia 1 v.

Broughton, Rhoda, & Elizabeth Bisland.

A Widower Indeed 1 v.

Brown, John, † 1882.

Rab and his Friends, and other Papers 1 v.

Browning, Elizabeth Barrett, † 1861.

A Selection from her Poetry (with Portrait) 1 v. — Aurora Leigh 1 v.

Browning, Robert, † 1889.

Poetical Works (with Portrait) 4 v.

Bullen, Frank T.

The Cruise of the "Cachalot" 2 v.

Bulwer, Edward, Lord Lytton, † 1873.

Pelham (with Portrait) 1 v. — Eugene Aram 1 v. — Paul Clifford 1 v. — Zanoni 1 v. — The Last Days of Pompeii 1 v. — The Disowned 1 v. — Ernest Maltravers 1 v. — Alice 1 v. — Eva, and The Pilgrims of the Rhine 1 v. — Devereux 1 v. — Godolphin and Falkland 1 v. — Rienzi 1 v. — Night and Morning 1 v. — The Last of the Barons 2 v. — Athens 2 v. — The Poems and Ballads of Schiller 1 v. — Lucretia 2 v. — Harold 2 v. — King Arthur 2 v. — The New Timon, and St. Stephen's 1 v. — The Caxtons 2 v. — My Novel 4 v. — What will he do with it? 4 v. — Dramatic Works 2 v. — A Strange Story 2 v. — Caxtoniana 2 v. — The Lost Tales of Miletus 1 v. — Miscellaneous Prose Works 4 v. — Odes and Epodes of Horace 2 v. — Kenelm Chillingly 4 v. — The Coming Race 1 v. — The Parisians 4 v. — Pausanias, the Spartan 1 v.

Bulwer, Henry Lytton (Lord Dalling), † 1872.

Historical Characters 2 v. — The Life of Viscount Palmerston 3 v.

Bunyan, John, † 1688.

The Pilgrim's Progress 1 v.

"Buried Alone," Author of (Charles Wood).

Buried Alone 1 v.

Burnett, Mrs. Frances Hodgson (Am.).

Through one Administration 2 v. — Little Lord Fauntleroy 1 v. — Sara Crewe, and Editha's Burglar 1 v. — The Pretty Sister of José 1 v. — A Lady of Quality 2 v. — His Grace of Osmonde 2 v.

Burney, Miss (Madame D'Arblay), † 1840.

Evelina 1 v.

Burns, Robert, † 1796.

Poetical Works (with Portrait) 1 v.

Burton, Richard F., † 1890.

A Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina 3 v.

Bury, Baroness de: *vide* "Al for Greed."

Butler, A. J.

Bismarck. His Reflections and Re miniscences. Translated from the grea German edition, under the supervision c A. J. Butler. With two Portraits. 3 v.

Buxton, Mrs. B. H., † 1881.

Jennie of "The Prince's," 2 v. — Won 2 v. — Great Grenfell Gardens 2 v. - Nell—on and off the Stage 2 v. — Fro the Wings 2 v.

Byron, Lord, † 1824.

Poetical Works (with Portrait) 5 v.

Caffyn, Mrs. Mannington (Iota)

A Yellow Aster 1 v. — Children of Ci cumstance 2 v. — Anne Mauleverer 2 v

Caine, Hall.

The Bondman 2 v. — The Manxma 2 v. — The Christian 2 v. — The Etern City 3 v. — The Prodigal Son 2 v.

Cameron, Verney Lovett.

Across Africa 2 v.

Campbell Praed, Mrs.: *vid* Praed.

Carey, Rosa Nouchette.

Not Like other Girls 2 v. — "But Me must Work" 1 v. — Sir Godfrey's Grand daughters 2 v. — The Old, Old Story 2 v — Herb of Grace 2 v. — The Highway o Fate 2 v. — A Passage Perilous 2 v. — A the Moorings 2 v.

Carlyle, Thomas, † 1881.

The French Revolution 3 v. — Fre derick the Great 13 v. — Oliver Crom well's Letters and Speeches 4 v. — The Life of Schiller 1 v.

Carr, Alaric.

Treherne's Temptation 2 v.

Castle, Agnes & Egerton.

The Star Dreamer 2 v. — Incomparable Bellairs 1 v. — Rose of the World 1 v. — French Nan 1 v. — "If Youth but knew!" 1 v.

Castle, Egerton.

Consequences 2 v. — "La Bella," and Others 1 v.

Charles, Mrs. Elizabeth Rundle, † 1896: *vide* Author of "Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family."

Charlesworth, Maria Louisa, † 1880.

Oliver of the Mill 1 v.

Cholmondeley, Mary.

Diana Tempest 2 v. — Red Pottage 2 v. — Moth and Rust 1 v.

Christian, Princess: *vide* **Alice, Grand Duchess of Hesse.**

"Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family," Author of (Mrs. E. Rundle Charles), † 1896.

Chronicles of the Schönberg-Cotta Family 2 v. — The Draytons and the Davenants 2 v. — On Both Sides of the Sea 2 v. — Winifred Bertram 1 v. — Diary of Mrs. Kitty Trevylyan 1 v. — The Victory of the Vanquished 1 v. — The Cottage by the Cathedral and other Parables 1 v. — Against the Stream 2 v. — The Bertram Family 2 v. — Conquering and to Conquer 1 v. — Lapsed, but not Lost 1 v.

Clark, Alfred.

The Finding of Lot's Wife 1 v.

Clemens, Samuel L.: *v.* **Twain.**

Clifford, Mrs. W. K.

Love-Letters of a Worldly Woman 1 v. — Aunt Anne 2 v. — The Last Touches, and other Stories 1 v. — Mrs. Keith's Crime 1 v. — A Wild Proxy 1 v. — A Flash of Summer 1 v. — A Woman Alone 1 v. — Woodside Farm 1 v.

Clive, Mrs. Caroline, † 1873: *vide* Author of "Paul Ferroll."

Cobbe, Frances Power, † 1904.

Re-Echoes 1 v.

Coleridge, C. R.

An *English Squire* 2 v.

Coleridge, M. E.

The King with two Faces 2 v.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, † 1834.

Poems 1 v.

Collins, Charles Allston, † 1873.

A Cruise upon Wheels 2 v.

Collins, Mortimer, † 1876.

Sweet and Twenty 2 v. — A Fight with Fortune 2 v.

Collins, Wilkie, † 1889.

After Dark 1 v. — Hide and Seek 2 v. — A Plot in Private Life, etc. 1 v. — The Woman in White 2 v. — Basil 1 v. — No Name 3 v. — The Dead Secret, and other Tales 2 v. — Antonina 2 v. — Armadale 3 v. — The Moonstone 2 v. — Man and Wife 3 v. — Poor Miss Finch 2 v. — Miss or Mrs.? 1 v. — The New Magdalen 2 v. — The Frozen Deep 1 v. — The Law and the Lady 2 v. — The Two Destinies 1 v. — My Lady's Money, and Percy and the Prophet 1 v. — The Haunted Hotel 1 v. — The Fallen Leaves 2 v. — Jezebel's Daughter 2 v. — The Black Robe 2 v. — Heart and Science 2 v. — "I say No," 2 v. — The Evil Genius 2 v. — The Guilty River, and The Ghost's Touch 1 v. — The Legacy of Cain 2 v. — Blind Love 2 v.

"Cometh up as a Flower," Author of: *vide* **Rhoda Broughton.**

Conrad, Joseph.

An Outcast of the Islands 2 v. — Tales of Unrest 1 v.

Conway, Hugh (F. J. Fargus), † 1885.

Called Back 1 v. — Bound Together 2 v. — Dark Days 1 v. — A Family Affair 2 v. — Living or Dead 2 v.

Cooper, James Fenimore (Am.), † 1851.

The Spy (with Portrait) 1 v. — The Two Admirals 1 v. — The Jack O'Lantern 1 v.

Cooper, Mrs.: *vide* **Katharine Saunders.**

Corelli, Marie.

Vendetta! 2 v. — Thelma 2 v. — A Romance of Two Worlds 2 v. — "Ardath" 3 v. — Wormwood. A Drama of Paris 2 v. — The Hired Baby, with other Stories and Social Sketches 1 v. — Barabbas; A Dream of the World's Tragedy 2 v. — The Sorrows of Satan 2 v. — The Mighty Atom 1 v. — The Murder of Delicia 1 v. — Ziska 1 v. — Boy. A Sketch. 2 v. — The Master-Christian 2 v. — "Temporal Power" 2 v. — God's Good Man 2 v. — Free Opinions 1 v.

Cotes, Mrs. Everard.

Those Delightful Americans 1 v.

"County, the," Author of.

The County 1 v.

Craik, George Lillie, † 1866.

A Manual of English Literature and of the History of the English Language 2 v.

Craik, Mrs. (Miss Dinah M. Mulock), † 1887.

John Halifax, Gentleman 2 v. — The Head of the Family 2 v. — A Life for a Life 2 v. — A Woman's Thoughts about Women 1 v. — Agatha's Husband 1 v. — Romantic Tales 1 v. — Domestic Stories 1 v. — Mistress and Maid 1 v. — The Ogilvies 1 v. — Lord Erlistoun 1 v. — Christian's Mistake 1 v. — Bread upon the Waters 1 v. — A Noble Life 1 v. — Olive 2 v. — Two Marriages 1 v. — Studies from Life 1 v. — Poems 1 v. — The Woman's Kingdom 2 v. — The Unkind Word, and other Stories 2 v. — A Brave Lady 2 v. — Hannah 2 v. — Fair France 1 v. — My Mother and I 1 v. — The Little Lame Prince 1 v. — Sermons out of Church 1 v. — The Laurel-Bush; Two little Tinkers 1 v. — A Legacy 2 v. — Young Mrs. Jardine 2 v. — His Little Mother, and other Tales and Sketches 1 v. — Plain Speaking 1 v. — Miss Tommy 1 v. — King Arthur 1 v.

Craik, Georgiana M. (Mrs. May).

Lost and Won 1 v. — Faith Unwin's Ordeal 1 v. — Leslie Tyrrell 1 v. — Winifred's Wooing, etc. 1 v. — Mildred 1 v. — Esther Hill's Secret 2 v. — Hero Trevelyan 1 v. — Without Kith or Kin 2 v. — Only a Butterfly 1 v. — Sylvia's Choice; *Theresa* 2 v. — Anne Warwick 1 v. — *Dorcas* 2 v. — Two Women 2 v.

Craik, Georgiana M., & Stirling.

Two Tales of Married Life (I Bear, by Miss Craik; A True Ma C. Stirling) 2 v.

Craven, Mrs. Augustus Lady Fullerton.

Crawford, F. Marion (A

Mr. Isaacs 1 v. — Doctor Claudi To Leeward 1 v. — A Roman 1 v. — An American Politician Zoroaster 1 v. — A Tale of a Lonel 2 v. — Saracinesca 2 v. — Marzio's 1 v. — Paul Patoff 2 v. — With the In 1 v. — Greifenstein 2 v. — San 2 v. — A Cigarette-Maker's R 1 v. — Khaled 1 v. — The Witch o 2 v. — The Three Fates 2 v. — Do 2 v. — The Children of the Kin Pietro Ghisleri 2 v. — Marion Da — Katharine Lauderdale 2 v. — T stons 2 v. — Casa Braccio 2 v. — Johnstone's Son 1 v. — Taquisar A Rose of Yesterday 1 v. — C 2 v. — Via Crucis 2 v. — In the F the King 2 v. — Marietta, a Venice 2 v. — Cecilia 2 v. — Th of Rome 2 v. — Whosoever Shall 2 v. — Soprano 2 v.

Crockett, S. R.

The Raiders 2 v. — Cleg Kell The Grey Man 2 v. — Love Idyll The Dark o' the Moon 2 v.

Croker, B. M.

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Cross, J. W.: *vide* Eliot's Life.

Cudlip, Mrs. Pender: Thomas.

Cummins, Miss (Am.),

The Lamplighter 1 v. — Mabel 1 v. — El Fureidîs 1 v. — Haunted H

Cushing, Paul.

The Blacksmith of Voe 2 v.

"Daily News."

War Correspondence, 1877, by bald Forbes and others 3 v.

"Dark," Author of.

Dark 1 v.

Davis, Richard Harding (Am.).
Gallegher, etc. 1 v. — Van Bibber and Others 1 v. — Ranson's Folly 1 v.

De Foe, Daniel, † 1731.
Robinson Crusoe 1 v.

Deland, Margaret (Am.).
John Ward, Preacher 1 v.

"Democracy," Author of (Am.).
Democracy 1 v.

"Demos," Author of: *vide* **George Gissing.**

"Diary and Notes," Author of: *vide* **Author of "Horace Templeton."**

Dickens, Charles, † 1870.
The Pickwick Club (with Portrait) 2 v. — American Notes 1 v. — Oliver Twist 1 v. — Nicholas Nickleby 2 v. — Sketches 1 v. — Martin Chuzzlewit 2 v. — A Christmas Carol; The Chimes; The Cricket on the Hearth 1 v. — Master Humphrey's Clock (Old Curiosity Shop; Barnaby Rudge, etc.) 3 v. — Pictures from Italy 1 v. — Dombey and Son 3 v. — David Copperfield 3 v. — Bleak House 4 v. — A Child's History of England (2 v. 8° M. 2,70.) — Hard Times 1 v. — Little Dorrit (with Illustrations) 4 v. — The Battle of Life; The Haunted Man 1 v. — A Tale of two Cities 2 v. — Hunted Down; The Uncommercial Traveller 1 v. — Great Expectations 2 v. — Christmas Stories, etc. 1 v. — Our Mutual Friend (with Illustrations) 4 v. — Somebody's Luggage; Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings; Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy 1 v. — Doctor Marigold's Prescriptions; Mugby Junction 1 v. — The Mystery of Edwin Drood (with Illustrations) 2 v. — The Mudfog Papers, 1 v. — The Letters of Charles Dickens, ed. by his Sister-in-law and his eldest Daughter 4 v. — *Vide* also Household Words, Novels and Tales, and John Forster.

Dickens, Charles, & Wilkie Collins.
No Thoroughfare; The Late Miss Hol*lingford 1 v.*

Disraeli, Benjamin, Lord Beaconsfield, † 1881.
Coningsby 1 v. — Sybil 1 v. — Contarini Fleming (with Portrait) 1 v. — Alroy 1 v. — Tancred 2 v. — Venetia 2 v. — Vivian Grey 2 v. — Henrietta Temple 1 v. — Lothair 2 v. — Endymion 2 v.

Dixon, Ella Hepworth.
The Story of a Modern Woman 1 v. — One Doubtful Hour 1 v.

Dixon, W. Hepworth, † 1879.
Personal History of Lord Bacon 1 v. — The Holy Land 2 v. — New America 2 v. — Spiritual Wives 2 v. — Her Majesty's Tower 4 v. — Free Russia 2 v. — History of two Queens 6 v. — White Conquest 2 v. — Diana, Lady Lyle 2 v.

Dixon, Jr., Thomas, (Am.).
The Leopard's Spots 2 v.

Dougall, L. (Am.).
Beggars All 2 v.

Dowie, Ménie Muriel.
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Doyle, Sir A. Conan.
The Sign of Four 1 v. — Micah Clarke 2 v. — The Captain of the Pole-Star, and other Tales 1 v. — The White Company 2 v. — A Study in Scarlet 1 v. — The Great Shadow, and Beyond the City 1 v. — The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — The Refugees 2 v. — The Firm of Girdlestone 2 v. — The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes 2 v. — Round the Red Lamp 1 v. — The Stark Munro Letters 1 v. — The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard 1 v. — Rodney Stone 2 v. — Uncle Bernac 1 v. — The Tragedy of the Korosko 1 v. — A Duet 1 v. — The Green Flag 1 v. — The Great Boer War 2 v. — The War in South Africa 1 v. — The Hound of the Baskervilles 1 v. — Adventures of Gerard 1 v. — The Return of Sherlock Holmes 2 v.

Drummond, Professor Henry, † 1897.
The Greatest Thing in the World; Pax Vobiscum; The Changed Life 1 v.

Dufferin, the Earl of.
Letters from High Latitudes 1 v.

Duncan, Sara Jeannette: *vide* **Mrs. Cotes.**

Dunton: *vide* **Th. Watts-Dunton.**

Earl, the, and the Doctor.
South Sea Bubbles 1 v.

Eastwick, Edward B., † 1883.
Autobiography of Lutfullah 1 v.

Edgeworth, Maria, *vide* Series for the Young, p. 29.

Edwardes, Mrs. Annie.
Archie Lovell 2 v. — Steven Lawrence, Yeoman 2 v. — Ought we to visit her? 2 v. — A Vagabond Heroine 1 v. — Leah: A Woman of Fashion 2 v. — A Blue-Stocking 1 v. — Jet: Her Face or Her Fortune? 1 v. — Vivian the Beauty 1 v. — A Ball-room Repentance 2 v. — A Girton Girl 2 v. — A Playwright's Daughter, and Bertie Griffiths 1 v. — Pearl-Powder 1 v. The Adventuress 1 v.

Edwards, Amelia B., † 1892.
Barbara's History 2 v. — Miss Carew 2 v. — Hand and Glove 1 v. — Half a Million of Money 2 v. — Debenham's Vow 2 v. — In the Days of my Youth 2 v. — Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys 1 v. — Monsieur Maurice 1 v. — A Night on the Borders of the Black Forest 1 v. — A Poetry-Book of Elder Poets 1 v. — A Thousand Miles up the Nile 2 v. — A Poetry-Book of Modern Poets 1 v. — Lord Brackenbury 2 v.

Edwards, M. Betham-: *vide* **Betham.**

Edward, Eggleston (Am.).
The Faith Doctor 2 v.

Elbon, Barbara (Am.).
Bethesda 2 v.

Eliot, George (Miss Evans—Mrs. Cross), † 1880.
Scenes of Clerical Life 2 v. — Adam Bede 2 v. — The Mill on the Floss 2 v. — Silas Marner 1 v. — Romola 2 v. — Felix Holt 2 v. — Daniel Deronda 4 v. — The Lifted Veil, and Brother Jacob 1 v. — *Impressions* of Theophrastus Such 1 v. — *Essays* and Leaves from a Note-Book 1 v. — George Eliot's Life, edited by her *Husband*, J. W. Cross 4 v.

"Elizabeth and her German Garden," Author of.
Elizabeth and her German Garden 1 v. — The Solitary Summer 1 v. — The Benefactress 2 v. — Princess Priscilla's Fortnight 1 v. — The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen 1 v.

Elliot, Mrs. Frances, † 1898.
Diary of an Idle Woman in Italy 2 v. — Old Court Life in France 2 v. — The Italians 2 v. — The Diary of an Idle Woman in Sicily 1 v. — Pictures of Old Rome 1 v. — The Diary of an Idle Woman in Spain 2 v. — The Red Cardinal 1 v. — The Story of Sophia 1 v. — Diary of an Idle Woman in Constantinople 1 v. — Old Court Life in Spain 2 v. — Roman Gossip 1 v.

"Englishwoman's Love-Letters, an," Author of.
An Englishwoman's Love-Letters 1 v.

Erroll, Henry.
An Ugly Duckling 1 v.

Esler, E. Rentoul.
The Way they loved at Grimpat 1 v.

"Essays and Reviews," the Authors of.
Essays and Reviews. By various Authors 1 v.

"Estelle Russell," Author of.
Estelle Russell 2 v.

Esterre-Keeling, Elsa D'.
Three Sisters 1 v. — A Laughing Philosopher 1 v. — The Professor's Wooing 1 v. — In Thoughtland and in Dreamland 1 v. — Orchardscroft 1 v. — Appassionata 1 v. — Old Maids and Young 2 v. — The Queen's Serf 1 v.

"Euthanasia," Author of.
Euthanasia 1 v.

Ewing, Juliana Horatia, † 1885.
Jackanapes; The Story of a Short Life; Daddy Darwin's Dovecot 1 v. — A Flat Iron for a Farthing 1 v. — The Brownies, and other Tales 1 v.

"Expiated," Author of.
Expiated 2 v.

Fargus, F. J.: *vide* **Hugh Conway.**

', F. W. (Dean), † 1903.
and Dawn 3 v.

of Fenella, the," Authors

of Fenella, by 24 Authors 1 v.

, Alfred Laurence: *vide* F. Fowler.

, Mrs.: *vide* E. T. Fowler.

ll, Percy: *vide* F. C. lips.

George Manville.
on o' Dumford 2 v. — The ortwick 2 v.

ng, Henry, † 1754.
2 v.

ter, Mary and Jane: *vide* Douglas Wiggin.

Centuries
lish Language and Literature: liffe. — Geoffrey Chaucer. — awes. — Sir Thomas More. — penser. — Ben Jonson. — John homas Gray (vol. 500, published

ng, George (Am.).
. — Andromeda 2 v.

s, Archibald, † 1900.
iences of the War between l Germany 2 v. — Soldiering bling 1 v. — Memories and War and Peace 2 v. — *Vide* also ws," War Correspondence.

t, R. E.
2 v.

ter, Mrs.
- Rhona 2 v. — Roy and Viola Lord and My Lady 2 v. — I l and Loved 2 v. — June 2 v. — iitas 1 v. — Although he was a other Tales 1 v. — Corisande, Tales 1 v. — Once Again 2 v. — orld, Worldly 1 v. — Dearest Light of other Days 1 v. — Repented 1 v.

r, John, † 1876.
f Charles Dickens (with Illus- d Portraits) 6 v. — Life and liver Goldsmith 2 v.

Fothergill, Jessie.
The First Violin 2 v. — Probation 2 v. — Made or Marred, and "One of Three" 1 v. — Kith and Kin 2 v. — Peril 2 v. — Borderland 2 v.

"Found Dead," Author of: *vide* James Payn.

Fowler, Ellen Thorneycroft (Mrs. Alfred Laurence Felkin).
A Double Thread 2 v. — The Farringdons 2 v. — Fuel of Fire 1 v. — Place and Power 2 v.

Fowler, Ellen Thorneycroft (Mrs. A. L. Felkin) & Alfred Laurence Felkin.
Kate of Kate Hall 2 v.

Fox, Caroline, † 1871.
Memories of Old Friends from her Journals and Letters, edited by Horace N. Pym 2 v.

"Frank Fairlegh," Author of (F. E. Smedley), † 1864.
Frank Fairlegh 2 v.

Francis, M. E.
The Duenna of a Genius 1 v.

Frederic, Harold (Am.), † 1898.
Illumination 2 v. — March Hares 1 v.

Freeman, Edward A., † 1892.
The Growth of the English Constitution 1 v. — Select Historical Essays 1 v. — Sketches from French Travel 1 v.

Froude, James Anthony, † 1894.
Oceana 1 v. — The Spanish Story of the Armada, and other Essays 1 v.

Fullerton, Lady Georgiana, † 1885.
Ellen Middleton 1 v. — Grantley Manor 2 v. — Lady Bird 2 v. — Too Strange not to be True 2 v. — Constance Sherwood 2 v. — A Stormy Life 2 v. — Mrs. Gerald's Niece 2 v. — The Notary's Daughter 1 v. — The Lilies of the Valley, and The House of Penarvan 1 v. — The Countess de Bonneval 1 v. — Rose Leblanc 1 v. — Seven Stories 1 v. — The Life of Luisa de Carvajal 1 v. — A Will and a Way, and The Hands

kerchief at the Window 2 v. — Eliane 2 v. (by Mrs. Augustus Craven, translated by Lady Fullerton). — Laurentia 1 v.

Gardiner, Marguerite: *vide* **Lady Blessington.**

Gaskell, Mrs., † 1865.

Mary Barton 1 v. — Ruth 2 v. — North and South 1 v. — Lizzie Leigh, and other Tales 1 v. — The Life of Charlotte Brontë 2 v. — Lois the Witch, etc. 1 v. — Sylvia's Lovers 2 v. — A Dark Night's Work 1 v. — Wives and Daughters 3 v. — Cranford 1 v. — Cousin Phillis, and other Tales 1 v.

"Geraldine Hawthorne," Author of: *vide* **Author of "Miss Molly."**

Gerard, Dorothea (Madame Longard de Longgarde).

Lady Baby 2 v. — Recha 1 v. — Orthodox 1 v. — The Wrong Man 1 v. — A Spotless Reputation 1 v. — A Forgotten Sin 1 v. — One Year 1 v. — The Supreme Crime 1 v. — The Blood-Tax 1 v. — Holy Matrimony 1 v. — The Eternal Woman 1 v. — Made of Money 1 v. — The Bridge of Life 1 v. — The Three Essentials 1 v. — The Improbable Idyl 1 v.

Gerard, E. (Emily de Laszowska).

A Secret Mission 1 v. — A Foreigner 2 v. — The Extermination of Love 2 v.

Giberne, Agnes.

The Curate's Home 1 v.

Gissing, George, † 1903.

Demos. A Story of English Socialism 2 v. — New Grub Street 2 v.

Gladstone, Rt. Hon. W. E., † 1898.

Rome and the Newest Fashions in Religion 1 v. — Bulgarian Horrors, and Russia in Turkistan, with other Tracts 1 v. — The Hellenic Factor in the Eastern Problem, with other Tracts 1 v.

Glyn, Elinor.

The Visits of Elizabeth 1 v. — The Reflections of Ambrosine 1 v. — The Vicissitudes of Evangeline 1 v. — Beyond the Rocks 1 v.

Godfrey, Hal (Charlotte O'Conor-Eccles).

The Rejuvenation of Miss Semaphore 1 v.

Goldsmith, Oliver, † 1774.

Select Works (with Portrait) 1 v.

Goodman, Edward J.

Too Curious 1 v.

Gordon, Julien (Am.).

A Diplomat's Diary 1 v.

Gordon, Major-Gen. C. G., † 1885.

His Journals at Kartoum. Introduction and Notes by A. E. Hake (with eighteen Illustrations) 2 v.

Gore, Mrs., † 1861.

Castles in the Air 1 v. — The Dean's Daughter 2 v. — Progress and Prejudice 2 v. — Mammon 2 v. — A Life's Lessons 2 v. — The Two Aristocracies 2 v. — Heckington 2 v.

Grand, Sarah.

Our Manifold Nature 1 v. — Babs the Impossible 2 v.

Grant, Miss.

Victor Lescar 2 v. — The Sun-Maid 2 v. — My Heart's in the Highlands 2 v. — Artiste 2 v. — Prince Hugo 2 v. — Cara Roma 2 v.

Gray, Maxwell.

The Silence of Dean Maitland 2 v. — The Reproach of Annesley 2 v.

Grenville: Murray, E. C. (Trois-Etoiles), † 1881.

The Member for Paris 2 v. — Young Brown 2 v. — The Boudoir Cabal 3 v. — French Pictures in English Chalk *(First Series)* 2 v. — The Russians of To-day 1 v. — French Pictures in English Chalk *(Second Series)* 2 v. — Strange Tales 1 v. — That Artful Vicar 2 v. — Six Months in the Ranks 1 v. — People I have met 1 v.

Grimwood, Ethel St. Clair.

My Three Years in Manipur (with Portrait) 1 v.

Grohman, W. A. Baillie.

Tyrol and the Tyrolese 1 v.

Gunter, Archibald Clavering (Am.).

Mr. Barnes of New York 1 v.

Guthrie, F. Anstey: *vide* **Anstey.**

"Guy Livingstone," Author of (George Alfred Laurence), † 1876.

ıy Livingstone 1 v. — Sword and ıwn 1 v. — Barren Honour 1 v. — ırder and Bastille1 v. — Maurice Dering v. — Sans Merci 2 v. — Breaking a ıtterfly 2 v. — Anteros 2 v. — Harene 2 v.

Habberton, John (Am.).

elen's Babies & Other People's Children 1 v. — The Bowsham Puzzle 1 v. — ıe Tramp; Mrs. Mayburn's Twins 1 v.

Haggard, H. Rider.

ing Solomon's Mines 1 v. — She 2v. — ss 2 v. — Allan Quatermain 2 v. — The 'itch's Head 2 v. — Maiwa's Revenge /. — Mr. Meeson's Will 1 v. — Colonel uaritch, V. C. 2 v. — Cleopatra 2 v. — llan's Wife 1 v. — Beatrice 2 v. — Dawn v. — Montezuma's Daughter 2 v. — The eople of the Mist 2 v. — Joan Haste 2 v. — eart of the World 2 v. — The Wizard v. — Doctor Therne 1 v. — Swallow v. — Black Heart and White Heart, ıd Elissa 1 v. — Lysbeth 2 v. — A Winter ilgrimage 2 v. — Pearl-Maiden 2 v. — ella Fregelius 2 v. — The Brethren 2 v. Ayesha. The Return of 'She' 2 v. — ıe Way of the Spirit 2 v.

Haggard, H. Rider, & Andrew Lang.

ıe World's Desire 2 v.

Hake, A. E.: *vide* **Gen. Gordon.**

Hall, Mrs. S. C., † 1881.

ın Wrong be Right? 1 v. — Marian 2 v.

Hamerton, Philip Gilbert, † 1894.

armorne 1 v. — French and English 2 v.

Hardy, Miss Iza: *vide* **Author of "Not Easily Jealous."**

Hardy, Thomas.

he Hand of Ethelberta 2 v. — Far om the Madding Crowd 2 v. — The Reırn of the Native 2 v. — The Trumpet-ajor 2 v. — A Laodicean 2 v. — Two on Tower 2 v. — A Pair of Blue Eyes 2 v. A Group of Noble Dames 1 v. — Tess the D'Urbervilles 2 v. — Life's Little onies 1 v. — *Jude the Obscure* 2 v.

Harland, Henry, † 1905.

The Cardinal's Snuff-Box 1 v. — The Lady Paramount 1 v. — My Friend Prospero 1 v.

Harraden, Beatrice.

Ships that pass in the Night 1 v. — In Varying Moods 1 v. — Hilda Strafford, and The Remittance Man 1 v. — The Fowler 2 v. — Katharine Frensham 2 v. — The Scholar's Daughter 1 v.

Harrison, Agnes.

Martin's Vineyard 1 v.

Harte, Bret (Am.), † 1902.

Prose and Poetry (Tales of the Argonauts: — The Luck of Roaring Camp; The Outcasts of Poker Flat, etc. — Spanish and American Legends; Condensed Novels; Civic and Character Sketches; Poems) 2 v. — Idyls of the Foothills 1 v. — Gabriel Conroy 2 v. — Two Men of Sandy Bar 1 v. — Thankful Blossom, and other Tales 1 v. — The Story of a Mine 1 v. — Drift from Two Shores 1 v. — An Heiress of Red Dog, and other Sketches 1 v. — The Twins of Table Mountain, and other Tales 1 v. — Jeff Briggs's Love Story, and other Tales 1 v. — Flip, and other Stories 1 v. — On the Frontier 1 v. — By Shore and Sedge 1 v. — Maruja 1 v. — Snow-bound at Eagle's, and Devil's Ford 1 v. — The Crusade of the "Excelsior" 1 v. — A Millionaire of Rough-and-Ready, and other Tales 1 v. — Captain Jim's Friend, and the Argonauts of North Liberty 1 v. — Cressy 1 v. — The Heritage of Dedlow Marsh, and other Tales 1 v. — A Waif of the Plains 1 v. — A Ward of the Golden Gate 1 v. — A Sappho of Green Springs, and other Tales 1 v. — A First Family of Tasajara 1 v. — Colonel Starbottle's Client, and some other People 1 v. — Susy 1 v. — Sally Dows, etc. 1 v. — A Protégée of Jack Hamlin's, etc. 1 v. — The Bell-Ringer of Angel's, etc. 1 v. — Clarence 1 v. — In a Hollow of the Hills, and The Devotion of Enriquez 1 v. — The Ancestors of Peter Atherly, etc. 1 v. — Three Partners 1 v. — Tales of Trail and Town 1 v. — Stories in Light and Shadow 1 v. — Mr. Jack Hamlin's Mediation, and other Stories 1 v. — From Sand-Hill to Pine 1 v. — Under the Redwoods 1 v. — On the Old Trail 1 v. — Trent's Trust 1 v.

Havelock, Sir Henry: *vide* **Rev. W. Brock.**

Hawthorne, Nathaniel (Am.), † 1864.

The Scarlet Letter 1 v. — Transformation (The Marble Faun) 2 v. — Passages from the English Note-Books of Nathaniel Hawthorne 2 v.

Hector, Mrs.: *vide* Mrs. Alexander.

"Heir of Redclyffe, the," Author of: *vide* Charlotte M. Yonge.

Helps, Sir Arthur † 1875.

Friends in Council 2 v. — Ivan de Biron 2 v.

Hemans, Mrs. Felicia, † 1835.

Select Poetical Works 1 v.

Hewlett, Maurice.

The Forest Lovers 1 v. — Little Novels of Italy 1 v. — The Life and Death of Richard Yea-and-Nay 2 v. — New Canterbury Tales 1 v. — The Queen's Quair; or, The Six Years' Tragedy 2 v. — Fond Adventures 1 v. — The Fool Errant 2 v.

Hichens, Robert.

Flames 2 v. — The Slave 2 v. — Felix 2 v. — The Woman with the Fan 2 v. — The Garden of Allah 2 v. — The Black Spaniel, and Other Stories 1 v.

Hobart Pasha, Admiral, † 1886.

Sketches from my Life 1 v.

Hobbes, John Oliver.

The Gods, Some Mortals and Lord Wickenham 1 v. — The Serious Wooing 1 v.

Hoey, Mrs. Cashel.

A Golden Sorrow 2 v. — Out of Court 2 v.

Holdsworth, Annie E.

The Years that the Locust hath Eaten 1 v. — The Gods Arrive 1 v. — The Valley of the Great Shadow 1 v. — Great Lowlands 1 v. — A Garden of Spinsters 1 v.

Holme Lee: *vide* Harriet Parr.

Holmes, Oliver Wendell (Am.), † 1894.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — The Professor at the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — The Poet at the Breakfast-Table 1 v. — Over the Teacups 1 v.

Hope, Anthony (Hawkins).

Mr. Witt's Widow 1 v. — A Change of Air 1 v. — Half a Hero 1 v. — The Indiscretion of the Duchess 1 v. — The God in the Car 1 v. — The Chronicles of Count Antonio 1 v. — Comedies of Courtship 1 v. — The Heart of Princess Osra 1 v. — Phroso 2 v. — Simon Dale 2 v. — Rupert of Hentzau 1 v. — The King's Mirror 2 v. — Quisanté 1 v. — Tristram of Blent 2 v. — The Intrusions of Peggy 2 v. — Double Harness 2 v. — A Servant of the Public 2 v.

Hopkins, Tighe.

An Idler in Old France 1 v. — The Man in the Iron Mask 1 v. — The Dungeons of Old Paris 1 v. — The Silent Gate 1 v.

"Horace Templeton," Author of.

Diary and Notes 1 v.

Hornung, Ernest William.

A Bride from the Bush 1 v. — Under Two Skies 1 v. — Tiny Luttrell 1 v. — The Boss of Taroomba 1 v. — My Lord Duke 1 v. — Young Blood 1 v. — Some Persons Unknown 1 v. — The Amateur Cracksman 1 v. — The Rogue's March 1 v. — The Belle of Toorak 1 v. — Peccavi 1 v. — The Black Mask 1 v. — The Shadow of the Rope 1 v. — No Hero 1 v. — Denis Dent 1 v. — Irralie's Bushranger and The Unbidden Guest 1 v. — Stingaree 1 v. — A Thief in the Night 1 v.

"Household Words."

Conducted by Charles Dickens. 1851-56. 36 v. — NOVELS and TALES reprinted from Household Words by Charles Dickens. 1856-59. 11 v.

Houstoun, Mrs.: *vide* "Recommended to Mercy."

"How to be Happy though Married," Author of.

How to be Happy though Married 1 v.

Howard, Blanche Willis (Am.), † 1899.

One Summer 1 v. — Aunt Serena 1 v. — Guenn 2 v. — Tony, the Maid, etc. 1 v. — The Open Door 2 v.

Howard, Blanche Willis, † 1899, & William Sharp, † 1905.

A Fellowe and His Wife 1 v.

Howells, William Dean (Am.).

A Foregone Conclusion 1 v. — The Lady of the Aroostook 1 v. — A Modern

Instance 2 v. — The Undiscovered Country 1 v. — Venetian Life (with Portrait) 1 v. — Italian Journeys 1 v. — A Chance Acquaintance 1 v. — Their Wedding Journey 1 v. — A Fearful Responsibility, and Tonelli's Marriage 1 v. — A Woman's Reason 2 v. — Dr. Breen's Practice 1 v. — The Rise of Silas Lapham 2 v. — A Pair of Patent Lovers 1 v. — Miss Bellard's Inspiration 1 v.

Hughes, Thomas, † 1898.

Tom Brown's School-Days 1 v.

Hungerford, Mrs. (Mrs. Argles), † 1897.

Molly Bawn 2 v. — Mrs. Geoffrey 2 v. — Faith and Unfaith 2 v. — Portia 2 v. — Loys, Lord Berresford, and other Tales 1 v. — Her First Appearance, and other Tales 1 v. — Phyllis 2 v. — Rossmoyne 2 v. — Doris 2 v. — A Maiden all Forlorn, etc. 1 v — A Passive Crime, and other Stories 1 v. — Green Pleasure and Grey Grief 2 v. — A Mental Struggle 2 v. — Her Week's Amusement, and Ugly Barrington 1 v. — Lady Branksmere 2 v. — Lady Valworth's Diamonds 1 v. — A Modern Circe 2 v. — Marvel 2 v. — The Hon. Mrs. Vereker 1 v. — Under-Currents 2 v. — In Durance Vile, etc. 1 v. — A Troublesome Girl, and other Stories 1 v. — A Life's Remorse 2 v. — A Born Coquette 2 v. — The Duchess 1 v. — Lady Verner's Flight 1 v. — A Conquering Heroine, and "When in Doubt" 1 v. — Nora Creina 2 v. — A Mad Prank, and other Stories 1 v. — The Hoyden 2 v. — The Red House Mystery 1 v. — An Unsatisfactory Lover 1 v. — Peter's Wife 2 v. — The Three Graces 1 v. — A Tug of War 1 v. — The Professor's Experiment 2 v. — A Point of Conscience 2 v. — A Lonely Girl 1 v. — Lovice 1 v. — The Coming of Chloe 1 v.

Hunt, Mrs.: *vide* Averil Beaumont

Hunt, Violet.

The Human Interest 1 v.

Ingelow, Jean, † 1897.

Off the Skelligs 3 v. — Poems 2 v. — Fated to be Free 2 v. — Sarah de Berenger 2 v. — Don John 2 v.

Inglis, the Hon. Lady.

The Siege of Lucknow 1 v.

Ingram, John H.: *vide* E. A. Poe.

Iota: *vide* Mrs. Mannington Caffyn.

Irving, Washington (Am.), † 1859.

The Sketch Book (with Portrait) 1 v. — The Life of Mahomet 1 v. — Lives of the Successors of Mahomet 1 v. — Oliver Goldsmith 1 v. — Chronicles of Wolfert's Roost 1 v. — Life of George Washington 5 v.

Jackson, Mrs. Helen (H. H.) (Am.), † 1885.

Ramona 2 v.

Jacobs, W. W.

Many Cargoes 1 v. — The Skipper's Wooing, and The Brown Man's Servant 1 v. — Sea Urchins 1 v. — A Master of Craft 1 v. — Light Freights 1 v. — At Sunwich Port 1 v. — The Lady of the Barge 1 v. — Odd Craft 1 v. — Dialstone Lane 1 v. — Captains All 1 v.

James, Charles T. C.

Holy Wedlock 1 v.

James, G. P. R., † 1860.

Morley Ernstein (with Portrait) 1 v. — Forest Days 1 v. — The False Heir 1 v. — Arabella Stuart 1 v. — Rose d'Albret 1 v. — Arrah Neil 1 v. — Agincourt 1 v. — The Smuggler 1 v. — The Step-Mother 2 v. — Beauchamp 1 v. — Heidelberg 1 v. — The Gipsy 1 v. — The Castle of Ehrenstein 1 v. — Darnley 1 v. — Russell 2 v. — The Convict 2 v. — Sir Theodore Broughton 2 v.

James, Henry (Am.).

The American 2 v. — The Europeans 1 v. — Daisy Miller; An International Episode; Four Meetings 1 v. — Roderick Hudson 2 v. — The Madonna of the Future, etc. 1 v. — Eugene Pickering, etc. 1 v. — Confidence 1 v. — Washington Square, etc. 2 v. — The Portrait of a Lady 3 v. — Foreign Parts 1 v. — French Poets and Novelists 1 v. — The Siege of London; The Point of View; A Passionate Pilgrim 1 v. — Portraits of Places 1 v. — A Little Tour in France 1 v.

Jeaffreson, J. Cordy.

A Book about Doctors 2 v. — A Woman in spite of Herself 2 v. — The Real Lord Byron 3 v.

Jenkin, Mrs. Charles, † 1885.
"Who Breaks—Pays" 1 v. — Skirmishing 1 v. — Once and Again 2 v. — Two French Marriages 2 v. — Within an Ace 1 v. — Jupiter's Daughters 1 v.

Jenkins, Edward.
Ginx's Baby, his Birth and other Misfortunes; Lord Bantam 2 v.

"Jennie of 'The Prince's,'" Author of: *vide* B. H. Buxton.

Jerome, K. Jerome.
The Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow 1 v. — Diary of a Pilgrimage, and Six Essays 1 v. — Novel Notes 1 v. — Sketches in Lavender, Blue and Green 1 v. — The Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow 1 v. — Three Men on the Bummel 1 v. — Paul Kelver 2 v. — Tea-Table Talk 1 v. — Tommy and Co. 1 v. — Idle Ideas in 1905 1 v.

Jerrold, Douglas, † 1857.
History of St. Giles and St. James 2 v. — Men of Character 2 v.

"John Halifax, Gentleman," Author of: *vide* Mrs. Craik.

Johnny Ludlow: *vide* Mrs. Henry Wood.

Johnson, Samuel, † 1784.
Lives of the English Poets 2 v.

Jolly, Emily.
Colonel Dacre 2 v.

"Joshua Davidson," Author of: *vide* Mrs. E. Lynn Linton.

Kavanagh, Miss Julia, † 1877.
Nathalie 2 v. — Daisy Burns 2 v. — Grace Lee 2 v. — Rachel Gray 1 v. — Adèle 3 v. — A Summer and Winter in the Two Sicilies 2 v. — Seven Years, and other Tales 2 v. — French Women of Letters 1 v. — English Women of Letters 1 v. — Queen Mab 2 v. — Beatrice 2 v. — Sybil's Second Love 2 v. — Dora 2 v. — Silvia 2 v. — Bessie 2 v. — John Dorrien 3 v. — Two Lilies 2 v. — Forget-me-nots 2 v. — *Vide* also Series for the Young, p. 29.

***Keary*, Annie, † 1879.**
Oldbury 2 v. — Castle Daly 2 v.

Keeling, D'Esterre-: *vide* Esterre.

Kempis, Thomas a.
The Imitation of Christ. Translated from the Latin by W. Benham, B.D. 1 v.

Kimball, Richard B. (Am., †)
Saint Leger 1 v. — Romance of Student Life Abroad 1 v. — Undercurrents 1 v. — Was he Successful? 1 v. — To-Day in New York 1 v.

Kinglake, Alexander William, † 1891.
Eothen 1 v. — The Invasion of the Crimea 14 v.

Kingsley, Charles, † 1875.
Yeast 1 v. — Westward ho! 2 v. — Two Years ago 2 v. — Hypatia 2 v. — Alton Locke 1 v. — Hereward the Wake 2 v. — At Last 2 v. — His Letters and Memories of his Life, edited by his Wife 2 v

Kingsley, Henry, † 1876.
Ravenshoe 2 v. — Austin Elliot 1 v. — Geoffry Hamlyn 2 v. — The Hillyars and the Burtons 2 v. — Leighton Court 1 v. — Valentin 1 v. — Oakshott Castle 1 v. — Reginald Hetherege 2 v. — The Grange Garden 2 v.

Kinross, Albert.
An Opera and Lady Grasmere 1 v.

Kipling, Rudyard.
Plain Tales from the Hills 1 v. — The Second Jungle Book 1 v. — The Seven Seas 1 v. — "Captains Courageous" 1 v. — The Day's Work 1 v. — A Fleet in Being 1 v. — Stalky & Co. 1 v. — From Sea to Sea 2 v. — The City of Dreadful Night 1 v. — Kim 1 v. — Just So Stories 1 v. — The Five Nations 1 v. — Traffics and Discoveries 1 v.

Laffan, May.
Flitters, Tatters, and the Counsellor, etc. 1 v.

Lamb, Charles, † 1834.
The Essays of Elia and Elana 1 v.

Lang, Andrew: *vide* H. Rider Haggard.

Langdon, Mary (Am.).
Ida May 1 v.

"Last of the Cavaliers, the," Author of (Miss Piddington).
The Last of the Cavaliers 2 v. — The Gain of a Loss 2 v.

Łaszowska, Mme de: *vide* **E. Gerard.**

Laurence, George Alfred, Author of: *vide* **"Guy Livingstone."**

Lawless, the Hon. Emily.
Hurrish 1 v.

"Leaves from the Journal of our Life in the Highlands:" *vide* **Victoria R. I.**

Lee, Holme, † 1900: *vide* **Harriet Parr.**

Lee, Vernon.
Pope Jacynth, etc. 1 v. — Genius Loci, and The Enchanted Woods 1 v.

Le Fanu, J. S., † 1873.
Uncle Silas 2 v. — Guy Deverell 2 v.

Lemon, Mark, † 1870.
Wait for the End 2 v. — Loved at Last 2 v. — Falkner Lyle 2 v. — Leyton Hall, and other Tales 2 v. — Golden Fetters 2 v.

"Letters of Her Mother to Elizabeth, the," Author of: *vide* **W. R. H. Trowbridge.**

Lever, Charles, † 1872.
The O'Donoghue 1 v. — The Knight of Gwynne 3 v. — Arthur O'Leary 2 v. — Harry Lorrequer 2 v. — Charles O'Malley 3 v. — Tom Burke of "Ours" 3 v. — Jack Hinton 2 v. — The Daltons 4 v. — The Dodd Family Abroad 3 v. — The Martins of Cro' Martin 3 v. — The Fortunes of Glencore 2 v. — Roland Cashel 3 v. — Davenport Dunn 3 v. — Confessions of Con Cregan 2 v. — One of Them 2 v. — Maurice Tiernay 2 v. — Sir Jasper Carew 2 v. — Barrington 2 v. — A Day's Ride 2 v. — Luttrell of Arran 2 v. — Tony Butler 2 v. — Sir Brook Fossbrooke 2 v. — The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly 2 v. — A Rent in a Cloud 1 v. — That Boy of Norcott's 1 v. — St. Patrick's Eve; Paul Gosslett's Confessions 1 v. — Lord Kilgobbin 2 v.

Levett-Yeats, S.
The Honour of Savelli 1 v. — The Chevalier d'Auriac 1 v. — The Traitor's Way 1 v. — The Lord Protector 1 v. — Orrain 1 v.

Lewes, G. H., † 1878.
Ranthorpe 1 v. — The Physiology of Common Life 2 v. — On Actors and the Art of Acting 1 v.

Linton, Mrs. E. Lynn, † 1898.
The true History of Joshua Davidson 1 v. — Patricia Kemball 2 v. — The Atonement of Leam Dundas 2 v. — The World well Lost 2 v. — Under which Lord? 2 v. — With a Silken Thread, and other Stories 1 v. — Todhunters' at Loan-in' Head, and other Stories 1 v. — "My Love!" 2 v. — The Girl of the Period, and other Social Essays 1 v. — Ione 2 v.

Lockhart, Laurence W. M., † 1882.
Mine is Thine 2 v.

Loftus, Lord Augustus.
Diplomatic Reminiscences 1837 - 1862 (with Portrait) 2 v.

Longard, Mme de: *vide* **D. Gerard.**

Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth (Am.), † 1882.
Poetical Works (with Portrait) 3 v. — The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri 3 v. — The New-England Tragedies 1 v. — The Divine Tragedy 1 v. — Flower-de-Luce, and Three Books of Song 1 v. — The Masque of Pandora, and other Poems 1 v.

Lonsdale, Margaret.
Sister Dora (with a Portrait of Sister Dora) 1 v.

Lorimer, George Horace (Am.).
Letters from a Self-Made Merchant to his Son 1 v. — Old Gorgon Graham 1 v.

"Lost Battle, a," Author of.
A Lost Battle 2 v.

Lubbock, Sir John (Lord Avebury).
The Pleasures of Life 1 v. — The Beauties of Nature (with Illustrations) 1 v. — The Use of Life 1 v. — Scenery of Switzerland (with Illustrations) 2 v. — Essays and Addresses 1900-1903 1 v.

"Lutfullah": *vide* Eastwick.

Lyall, Edna, † 1903.
We Two 2 v. — Donovan 2 v. — In the Golden Days 2 v. — Knight-Errant 2 v. — Won by Waiting 2 v. — Wayfaring Men 2 v. — Hope the Hermit 2 v. — Doreen 2 v. — In Spite of All 2 v. — The Hinderers 1 v.

Lytton, Lord: *vide* E. Bulwer.

Lytton, Robert Lord (Owen Meredith), † 1891.
Poems 2 v. — Fables in Song 2 v.

Maartens, Maarten.
The Sin of Joost Avelingh 1 v. — An Old Maid's Love 2 v. — God's Fool 2 v. — The Greater Glory 2 v. — My Lady Nobody 2 v. — Her Memory 1 v. — Some Women I have known 1 v. — My Poor Relations 2 v. — Dorothea 2 v. — The Healers 2 v.

M^{c}Aulay, Allan: *vide* Kate Douglas Wiggin.

Macaulay, Lord, Thomas Babington, † 1859.
History of England (with Portrait) 10 v. — Critical and Historical Essays 5 v. — Lays of Ancient Rome 1 v. — Speeches 2 v. — Biographical Essays 1 v. — William Pitt, Atterbury 1 v. — (See also Trevelyan).

M^{c}Carthy, Justin.
The Waterdale Neighbours 2 v. — Dear Lady Disdain 2 v. — Miss Misanthrope 2 v. — A History of our own Times 5 v. — Donna Quixote 2 v. — A short History of our own Times 2 v. — A History of the Four Georges vols. 1 & 2. — A History of our own Times vols. 6 & 7 (supplemental). — A History of the Four Georges and of William IV. Vols. 3, 4 & 5 (supplemental).

Mac Donald, George, † 1905.
Alec Forbes of Howglen 2 v. — Annals of a Quiet Neighbourhood 2 v. — David Elginbrod 2 v. — The Vicar's Daughter 2 v. — Malcolm 2 v. — St. George and St. Michael 2 v. — The Marquis of Lossie 2 v. — Sir Gibbie 2 v. — Mary Marston 2 v. — The Gifts of the Child Christ, and other Tales 1 v. — The Princess and Curdie 1 v.

Mackarness, Mrs., † 1881.
Sunbeam Stories 1 v. — A Peerless *Wife* 2 v. — A Mingled Yarn 2 v.

Mackay, Eric, † 1898.
Love Letters of a Violinist, a
Poems 1 v.

M^{c}Knight, Charles (A
Old Fort Duquesne 2 v.

Maclaren, Ian.
Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush
The Days of Auld Langsyne 1
Majesty Baby 1 v.

Macleod, Fiona, † 1905
Wind and Wave 1 v. — The Suns
Tales 1 v.

Macleod, Norman, † 18
The Old Lieutenant and his Son

Macpherson, James, †
***vide* Ossian.**

Macquoid, Mrs.
Patty 2 v. — Miriam's Marriag
Pictures across the Channel 2 v
Soon 1 v. — My Story 2 v. — D
— Beside the River 2 v. — A
Lover 2 v.

"Mademoiselle Mori," of (Miss Roberts).
Mademoiselle Mori 2 v. — De
— Madame Fontenoy 1 v. —
Edge of the Storm 1 v. — The A
Lys 2 v. — In the Olden Time 2

Mahon, Lord: *vide* Stan

Maine, E. S.
Scarscliff Rocks 2 v.

Malet, Sir Edward, G.C.M.G.
Shifting Scenes 1 v.

Malet, Lucas.
Colonel Enderby's Wife 2 v.
History of Sir Richard Calmady

Malmesbury, the Earl of,
Memoirs of an Ex-Minister 3 v.

Mann, Mary E.
A Winter's Tale 1 v. — The
Star 1 v.

Mansfield, Robert Blac
The Log of the Water Lily 1 v.

Mark Twain: *vide* **Twain.**

"Marmorne," Author of: *vide* **P. G. Hamerton.**

Marryat, Capt., † 1848.

acob Faithful (with Portrait) 1 v. — ercival Keene 1 v. — Peter Simple 1 v. — aphet in Search of a Father 1 v. — Monsieur Violet 1 v. — The Settlers in anada 1 v. — The Mission 1 v. — The rivateer's-Man 1 v. — The Children of ie New-Forest 1 v. — Valerie 1 v. — Ir. Midshipman Easy 1 v. — The King's wn 1 v.

Marryat, Florence, † 1899.

ove's Conflict 2 v. — For Ever and ver 2 v. — The Confessions of Gerald stcourt 2 v. — Nelly Brooke 2 v. — éronique 2 v. — Petronel 2 v. — Her ord and Master 2 v. — The Prey of the ods 1 v. — Life and Letters of Captain Marryat 1 v. — Mad Dumaresq 2 v. — o Intentions 2 v. — Fighting the Air v. — A Star and a Heart; An Utter Impossibility 1 v. — The Poison of Asps, nd other Stories 1 v. — A Lucky Disappointment, and other Stories 1 v. — "My wn Child" 2 v. — Her Father's Name v. — A Harvest of Wild Oats 2 v. — Little Stepson 1 v. — Written in Fire v. — Her World against a Lie 2 v. — Broken Blossom 2 v. — The Root of l Evil 2 v. — The Fair-haired Alda 2 v. — Vith Cupid's Eyes 2 v. — My Sister the ctress 2 v. — Phyllida 2 v. — How they ved Him 2 v. — Facing the Footlights vith Portrait) 2 v. — A Moment of Madess, and other Stories 1 v. — The Ghost Charlotte Cray, and other Stories v. — Peeress and Player 2 v. — Under e Lilies and Roses 2 v. — The Heart Jane Warner 2 v. — The Heir Presumptive 2 v. — The Master Passion 2 v. Spiders of Society 2 v. — Driven to Bay v. — A Daughter of the Tropics 2 v. — entleman and Courtier 2 v. — On Circumstantial Evidence 2 v. — Mount Eden. Romance 2 v. — Blindfold 2 v. — A carlet Sin 1 v. — A Bankrupt Heart 2 v. The Spirit World 1 v. — The Beautiful oul 1 v. — At Heart a Rake 2 v. — he Strange Transfiguration of Hannah tubbs 1 v. — The Dream that Stayed v. — A Passing Madness 1 v. — The lood of the Vampire 1 v. — A Soul on ire 1 v. — Iris the Avenger 1 v.

Marsh, Mrs. Anne (Caldwell), † 1874.

Ravenscliffe 2 v. — Emilia Wyndham 2 v. — Castle Avon 2 v. — Aubrey 2 v. — The Heiress of Haughton 2 v. — Evelyn Marston 2 v. — The Rose of Ashurst 2 v.

Marshall, Mrs. Emma, † 1899.

Mrs. Mainwaring's Journal 1 v. — Benvenuta 1 v. — Lady Alice 1 v. — Dayspring 1 v. — Life's Aftermath 1 v. — In the East Country 1 v. — No. XIII; or, The Story of the Lost Vestal 1 v. — In Four Reigns 1 v. — On the Banks of the Ouse 1 v. — In the City of Flowers 1 v. — Alma 1 v. — Under Salisbury Spire 1 v. — The End Crowns All 1 v. — Winchester Meads 1 v. — Eventide Light 1 v. — Winifrede's Journal 1 v. — Bristol Bells 1 v. — In the Service of Rachel Lady Russell 1 v. — A Lily among Thorns 1 v. — Penshurst Castle 1 v. — Kensington Palace 1 v. — The White King's Daughter 1 v. — The Master of the Musicians 1 v. — An Escape from the Tower 1 v. — A Haunt of Ancient Peace 1 v. — Castle Meadow 1 v. — In the Choir of Westminster Abbey 1 v. — The Young Queen of Hearts 1 v. — Under the Dome of St. Paul's 1 v. — The Parson's Daughter 1 v.

Mason, A. E. W.

The Four Feathers 2 v. — Miranda of the Balcony 1 v. — The Courtship of Morrice Buckler 2 v. — The Truants 2 v. — The Watchers 1 v.

Mathers, Helen (Mrs. Henry Reeves).

"Cherry Ripe!" 2 v. — "Land o' the Leal" 1 v. — My Lady Green Sleeves 2 v. — As he comes up the Stair, etc. 1 v. — Sam's Sweetheart 2 v. — Eyre's Acquittal 2 v. — Found Out 1 v. — Murder or Manslaughter? 1 v. — The Fashion of this World (80 Pf.) — Blind Justice, and "Who, being dead, yet Speaketh" 1 v. — What the Glass Told, and A Study of a Woman 1 v. — Bam Wildfire 2 v. — Becky 2 v. — Cinders 1 v. — "Honey" 1 v. — Griff of Griffithscourt 1 v. — The New Lady Teazle, and Other Stories and Essays 1 v. — The Ferryman 1 v.

Maurice, Colonel.

The Balance of Military Power in Europe 1 v.

Maurier, George du, † 1896.

Trilby 2 v. — The Martian 2 v.

Maxwell, Mrs.: *v.* **Miss Braddon.**

Maxwell, W. B.
The Ragged Messenger 2 v.

"Mehalah," Author of: *vide* **Baring-Gould.**

Melville, George J. Whyte, † 1878.
Kate Coventry 1 v. — Holmby House 2 v. — Digby Grand 1 v. — Good for Nothing 2 v. — The Queen's Maries 2 v. — The Gladiators 2 v. — The Brookes of Bridlemere 2 v. — Cerise 2 v. — The Interpreter 2 v. — The White Rose 2 v. — M. or N. 1 v. — Contraband 1 v. — Sarchedon 2 v. — Uncle John 2 v. — Katerfelto 1 v. — Sister Louise 1 v. — Rosine 1 v. — Roys' Wife 2 v. — Black but Comely 2 v. — Riding Recollections 1 v.

Memorial Volumes: *vide* **Five Centuries** (vol. 500); **The New Testament** (vol. 1000); **Henry Morley** (vol. 2000).

Meredith, George.
The Ordeal of Richard Feverel 2 v. — Beauchamp's Career 2 v. — The Tragic Comedians 1 v. — Lord Ormont and his Aminta 2 v. — The Amazing Marriage 2 v.

Meredith, Owen: *vide* **Robert Lord Lytton.**

Merrick, Leonard.
The Man who was good 1 v. — This Stage of Fools 1 v. — Cynthia 1 v. — One Man's View 1 v. — The Actor-Manager 1 v. — The Worldlings 1 v. — When Love flies out o' the Window 1 v. — Conrad in Quest of His Youth 1 v. — The Quaint Companions 1 v.

Merriman, Henry Seton, † 1903.
Young Mistley 1 v. — Prisoners and Captives 2 v. — From One Generation to Another 1 v. — With Edged Tools 2 v. — The Sowers 2 v. — Flotsam 1 v. — In Kedar's Tents 1 v. — Roden's Corner 1 v. — The Isle of Unrest 1 v. — The Velvet Glove 1 v. — The Vultures 1 v. — Barlasch of the Guard 1 v. — Tomaso's Fortune, and Other Stories 1 v. — The Last Hope 2 v.

Merriman, H. S., & S. G. Tallentyre.
The Money-Spinner, etc. 1 v.

Milne, James.
The Epistles of Atkins 1 v.

Milton, John, † 1674.
Poetical Works 1 v.

"Molly, Miss," Author of.
Geraldine Hawthorne 1 v.

"Molly Bawn," Author of: *vide* **Mrs. Hungerford.**

Montgomery, Florence.
Misunderstood 1 v. — Thrown Together 2 v. — Thwarted 1 v. — Wild Mike 1 v. — Seaforth 2 v. — The Blue Veil 1 v. — Transformed 1 v. — The Fisherman's Daughter, etc. 1 v. — Colonel Norton 2 v. — Prejudged 1 v. — An Unshared Secret, and Other Tales 1 v.

Moore, Frank Frankfort.
"I Forbid the Banns" 2 v. — A Gray Eye or So 2 v. — One Fair Daughter 2 v. — They Call it Love 2 v. — The Jessamy Bride 1 v. — The Millionaires 1 v. — Nell Gwyn—Comedian 1 v. — A Damsel or Two 1 v. — Castle Omeragh 2 v. — Shipmates in Sunshine 2 v. — The Original Woman 1 v. — The White Causeway 1 v. — The Artful Miss Dill 1 v.

Moore, George.
Celibates 1 v. — Evelyn Innes 2 v. — Sister Teresa 2 v. — The Untilled Field 1 v. — Confessions of a Young Man 1 v. — The Lake 1 v.

Moore, Thomas, † 1852.
Poetical Works (with Portrait) 5 v.

Morgan, Lady, † 1859.
Memoirs 3 v.

Morley, Henry, † 1894.
Of English Literature in the Reign of Victoria. With Facsimiles of the Signatures of Authors in the Tauchnitz Edition (v. 2000, published 1881) 1 v.

Morris, William.
A Selection from his Poems. Edited with a Memoir by F. Hueffer 1 v.

Morrison, Arthur.
Tales of Mean Streets 1 v. — A Child of the Jago 1 v. — To London Town 1 v. — Cunning Murrell 1 v. — The Hole in the Wall 1 v. — The Green Eye of Goona 1 v. — Divers Vanities 1 v.

Muirhead, James Fullarton.
The Land of Contrasts 1 v.

Mulock, Miss: *vide* **Mrs. Craik.**

Murray, David Christie.
Rainbow Gold 2 v.

Murray, Grenville: *v.* **Grenville.**

"My Little Lady," Author of: *vide* **E. Frances Poynter.**

New Testament, the.
The Authorised English Version, with Introduction and Various Readings from the three most celebrated Manuscripts of the Original Text, by Constantine Tischendorf (vol. 1000, published 1869) 1 v.

Newby, Mrs. C. J.
Common Sense 2 v.

Newman, Dr. J. H. (Cardinal Newman), † 1890.
Callista 1 v.

Nicholls, Mrs.: *vide* **Currer Bell.**

"Nina Balatka," Author of: *vide* **Anthony Trollope.**

"No Church," Author of (F. Robinson).
No Church 2 v. — Owen:—a Waif 2 v.

Noel, Lady Augusta.
From Generation to Generation 1 v. — Hithersea Mere 2 v.

Norris, Frank (Am.), † 1902.
The Octopus 2 v. — The Pit 2 v.

Norris, W. E.
My Friend Jim 1 v. — A Bachelor's Blunder 2 v. — Major and Minor 2 v. — The Rogue 2 v. — Miss Shafto 2 v. — Mrs. Fenton 1 v. — Misadventure 2 v. — Saint Ann's 1 v. — A Victim of Good Luck 1 v. — The Dancer in Yellow 1 v. — Clarissa Furiosa 2 v. — Marietta's Marriage 2 v. — The Fight for the Crown 1 v. — The Widower 1 v. — Giles Ingilby 1 v. — The Flower of the Flock 1 v. — His Own Father 1 v. — The Credit of the County 1 v. — Lord Leonard the Luckless 1 v. — Nature's Comedian 1 v. — Nigel's Vocation 1 v. — Barham of Beltana 1 v.

Norton, Hon. Mrs., † 1877.
Stuart of Dunleath 2 v. — Lost and Saved 2 v. — Old Sir Douglas 2 v.

"Not Easily Jealous," Author of (Miss Iza Hardy).
Not Easily Jealous 2 v.

"Novels and Tales": *vide* **"Household Words."**

O'Conor-Eccles, Charlotte: *vide* **Hal Godfrey.**

Oliphant, Laurence, † 1888.
Altiora Peto 2 v. — Masollam 2 v.

Oliphant, Mrs., † 1897.
The Last of the Mortimers 2 v. — Mrs. Margaret Maitland 1 v. — Agnes 2 v. — Madonna Mary 2 v. — The Minister's Wife 2 v. — The Rector and the Doctor's Family 1 v. — Salem Chapel 2 v. — The Perpetual Curate 2 v. — Miss Marjoribanks 2 v. — Ombra 2 v. — Memoir of Count de Montalembert 2 v. — May 2 v. — Innocent 2 v. — For Love and Life 2 v. — A Rose in June 1 v. — The Story of Valentine and his Brother 2 v. — Whiteladies 2 v. — The Curate in Charge 1 v. — Phœbe, Junior 2 v. — Mrs. Arthur 2 v. — Carità 2 v. — Young Musgrave 2 v. — The Primrose Path 2 v. — Within the Precincts 3 v. — The Greatest Heiress in England 2 v. — He that will not when he may 2 v. — Harry Joscelyn 2 v. — In Trust 2 v. — It was a Lover and his Lass 3 v. — The Ladies Lindores 3 v. — Hester 3 v. — The Wizard's Son 3 v. — A Country Gentleman and his Family 2 v. — Neighbours on the Green 1 v. — The Duke's Daughter 1 v. — The Fugitives 1 v. — Kirsteen 2 v. — Life of Laurence Oliphant and of Alice Oliphant, his Wife 2 v. — The Little Pilgrim in the Unseen 1 v. — The Heir Presumptive and the Heir Apparent 2 v. — The Sorceress 2 v. — Sir Robert's Fortune 2 v. — The Ways of Life 1 v. — Old Mr. Tredgold 2 v.

"One who has kept a Diary": *vide* **George W. E. Russell.**

Osbourne, Lloyd.
Baby Bullet 1 v.

Ossian.
The Poems of Ossian. Translated by James Macpherson 1 v.

Ouida.
Idalia 2 v. — Tricotrin 2 v. — Puck 2 v. — Chandos 2 v. — Strathmore 2 v. — Under two Flags 2 v. — Folle-Farine 2 v. — A Leaf in the Storm; A Dog of Flanders; A Branch of Lilac; A Provence Rose 1 v. — Cecil Castlemaine's Gage, and other Novelettes 1 v. — Madame la Marquise, and other Novelettes 1 v. — Pascarèl 2 v. — Held in Bondage 2 v. — Two little Wooden Shoes 1 v. — Signa (with Portrait) 3 v. — In a Winter City 1 v. — Ariadnê 2 v. — Friendship 2 v. — Moths 3 v. — Pipistrello, and other Stories 1 v. — A Village Commune 2 v. — In Maremma 3 v. — Bimbi

1 v. — Wanda 3 v. — Frescoes and other Stories 1 v. — Princess Napraxine 3 v. — Othmar 3 v. — A Rainy June (60 Pf.). Don Gesualdo (60 Pf.). — A House Party 1 v. — Guilderoy 2 v. — Syrlin 3 v. — Ruffino, and other Stories 1 v. — Santa Barbara, etc. 1 v. — Two Offenders 1 v. — The Silver Christ, etc. 1 v. — Toxin, and other Papers 1 v. — Le Selve, and Tonia 1 v. — The Massarenes 2 v. — An Altruist, and Four Essays 1 v. — La Strega, and other Stories 1 v. — The Waters of Edera 1 v. — Street Dust, and Other Stories 1 v. — Critical Studies 1 v.

"Outcasts, the," Author of: *vide* **"Roy Tellet."**

Parker, Sir Gilbert.

The Battle of the Strong 2 v. — Donovan Pasha, and Some People of Egypt 1 v. — The Seats of the Mighty 2 v.

Parr, Harriet (Holme Lee), † 1900.

Basil Godfrey's Caprice 2 v. — For Richer, for Poorer 2 v. — The Beautiful Miss Barrington 2 v. — Her Title of Honour 1 v. — Echoes of a Famous Year 1 v. — Katherine's Trial 1 v. — The Vicissitudes of Bessie Fairfax 2 v. — Ben Milner's Wooing 1 v. — Straightforward 2 v. — Mrs. Denys of Cote 2 v. — A Poor Squire 1 v.

Parr, Mrs.

Dorothy Fox 1 v. — The Prescotts of Pamphillon 2 v. — The Gosau Smithy, etc. 1 v. — Robin 2 v. — Loyalty George 2 v.

Paston, George.

A Study in Prejudices 1 v. — A Fair Deceiver 1 v.

Paul, Mrs.: *vide* **Author of "Still Waters."**

"Paul Ferroll," Author of (Mrs. Caroline Clive), † 1873.

Paul Ferroll 1 v. — Year after Year 1 v. — Why Paul Ferroll killed his Wife 1 v.

Payn, James, † 1898.

Found Dead 1 v. — Gwendoline's Harvest 1 v. — Like Father, like Son 2 v. — Not Wooed, but Won 2 v. — Cecil's Tryst 1 v. — A Woman's Vengeance 2 v. — *Murphy's* Master 1 v. — In the Heart of *a Hill*, and other Stories 1 v. — At Her *Mercy* 2 v. — The Best of Husbands 2 v. — *Walter's* Word 2 v. — Halves 2 v. — Fallen Fortunes 2 v. — What He cost Her 2 v. — By Proxy 2 v. — Less Black than we're Painted 2 v. — Under one Roof 2 v. — High Spirits 1 v. — High Spirits *(Second Series)* 1 v. — A Confidential Agent 2 v. — From Exile 2 v. — A Grape from a Thorn 2 v. — Some Private Views 1 v. — For Cash Only 2 v. — Kit: A Memory 2 v. — The Canon's Ward (with Portrait) 2 v. — Some Literary Recollections 1 v. — The Talk of the Town 1 v. — The Luck of the Darrells 2 v. — The Heir of the Ages 2 v. — Holiday Tasks 1 v. — Glow-Worm Tales *(First Series)* 1 v. — Glow-Worm Tales *(Second Series)* 1 v. — A Prince of the Blood 2 v. — The Mystery of Mirbridge 2 v. — The Burnt Million 2 v. — The Word and the Will 2 v. — Sunny Stories, and some Shady Ones 1 v. — A Modern Dick Whittington 2 v. — A Stumble on the Threshold 2 v. — A Trying Patient 1 v. — Gleams of Memory, and The Eavesdropper 1 v. — In Market Overt 1 v. — The Disappearance of George Driffell, and other Tales 1 v. — Another's Burden etc. 1 v. — The Backwater of Life, or Essays of a Literary Veteran 1 v.

Peard, Frances Mary.

One Year 2 v. — The Rose-Garden 1 v. — Unawares 1 v. — Thorpe Regis 1 v. — A Winter Story 1 v. — A Madrigal, and other Stories 1 v. — Cartouche 1 v. — Mother Molly 1 v. — Schloss and Town 2 v. — Contradictions 2 v. — Near Neighbours 1 v. — Alicia Tennant 1 v. — Madame's Granddaughter 1 v. — Donna Teresa 1 v. — Number One and Number Two 1 v. — The Ring from Jaipur 1 v.

Pemberton, Max.

The Impregnable City 1 v. — A Woman of Kronstadt 1 v. — The Phantom Army 1 v. — The Garden of Swords 1 v. — The Footsteps of a Throne 1 v. — Pro Patriâ 1 v. — The Giant's Gate 2 v. — I crown thee King 1 v. — The House under the Sea 1 v. — The Gold Wolf 1 v. — Doctor Xavier 1 v. — Red Morn 1 v. — Beatrice of Venice 2 v. — Mid the Thick Arrows 2 v. — My Sword for Lafayette 1 v.

Percy, Bishop Thomas, † 1811.

Reliques of Ancient English Poetry 3 v.

Philips, F. C.

As in a Looking Glass 1 v. — The Dean and his Daughter 1 v. — Lucy Smith 1 v. — A Lucky Young Woman 1 v. — Jack and Three Jills 1 v. — Little Mrs. Murray 1 v. —

Young Mr. Ainslie's Courtship 1 v. — Social Vicissitudes 1 v. — Extenuating Circumstances, and A French Marriage 1 v. — More Social Vicissitudes 1 v. — Constance 2 v. — That Wicked Mad'moiselle, etc. 1 v. — A Doctor in Difficulties, etc. 1 v. — Black and White 1 v. — "One Never Knows" 2 v. — Of Course 1 v. — Miss Ormerod's Protégé 1 v. — My little Husband 1 v. — Mrs. Bouverie 1 v. — A Question of Colour, and other Stories 1 v. — A Devil in Nun's Veiling 1 v. — A Full Confession, and other Stories 1 v. — The Luckiest of Three 1 v. — Poor Little Bella 1 v. — Eliza Clarke, Governess, and Other Stories 1 v. — Marriage, etc. 1 v. — Schoolgirls of To-day, etc. 1 v. — If Only, etc. 1 v. — An Unfortunate Blend 1 v.

Philips, F. C. & Percy Fendall.

A Daughter's Sacrifice 1 v. — Margaret Byng 1 v.

Philips, F. C. & C. J. Wills.

The Fatal Phryne 1 v. — The Scudamores 1 v. — A Maiden Fair to See 1 v. — Sybil Ross's Marriage 1 v.

Phillpotts, Eden.

Lying Prophets 2 v. — The Human Boy 1 v. — Sons of the Morning 2 v. — The Good Red Earth 1 v. — The Striking Hours 1 v. — The Farm of the Dagger 1 v. — The Golden Fetich 1 v.

Piddington, Miss: *vide* **Author of "The Last of the Cavaliers."**

Poe, Edgar Allan (Am.), † 1849.

Poems and Essays, edited with a new Memoir by John H. Ingram 1 v. — Tales, edited by John H. Ingram 1 v.

Pope, Alexander, † 1744.

Select Poetical Works (with Portrait) 1 v.

Poynter, Miss E. Frances.

My Little Lady 2 v. — Ersilia 2 v. — Among the Hills 1 v. — Madame de Presnel 1 v.

Praed, Mrs. Campbell.

Zéro 1 v. — Affinities 1 v. — The Head Station 2 v.

Prentiss, Mrs. E. (Am.), † 1878.

Stepping Heavenward 1 v.

Prince Consort, the, † 1861.

His Principal Speeches and Addresses *(with Portrait)* 1 v.

Pryce, Richard.

Miss Maxwell's Affections 1 v. — The Quiet Mrs. Fleming 1 v. — Time and the Woman 1 v.

Pym, Hor. N.: *v.* **Caroline Fox.**

Queen, H. M. the: *vide* **Victoria R. I.**

Quiller-Couch, A. T. ("Q").

Noughts and Crosses 1 v. — I Saw Three Ships 1 v. — Dead Man's Rock 1 v. — Ia and other Tales 1 v. — The Ship of Stars 1 v. — The Adventures of Harry Revel 1 v. — Fort Amity 1 v. — Shakespeare's Christmas, and Other Stories 1 v.

Rae, W. Fraser, † 1905.

Westward by Rail 1 v. — Miss Bayle's Romance 2 v. — The Business of Travel 1 v.

Raimond, C. E. (Miss Robins).

The Open Question 2 v. — The Magnetic North 2 v. — A Dark Lantern 2 v.

"Rajah's Heir, the," Author of.

The Rajah's Heir 2 v.

Reade, Charles, † 1884.

"It is never too late to mend" 2 v. — "Love me little, love me long" 1 v. — The Cloister and the Hearth 2 v. — Hard Cash 3 v. — Put Yourself in his Place 2 v. — A Terrible Temptation 2 v. — Peg Woffington 1 v. — Christie Johnstone 1 v. — A Simpleton 2 v. — The Wandering Heir 1 v. — A Woman-Hater 2 v. — Readiana 1 v. — Singleheart and Doubleface 1 v.

"Recommended to Mercy," Author of (Mrs. Houstoun).

"Recommended to Mercy" 2 v. — Zoe's "Brand" 2 v.

Reeves, Mrs.: *v.* **Helen Mathers.**

Rhys, Grace.

Mary Dominic 1 v. — The Wooing of Sheila 1 v.

Rice, James: *v.* **Walter Besant.**

Richards, Alfred Bate, † 1876.

So very Human 3 v.

Richardson, S., † 1761.

Clarissa Harlowe 4 v.

Riddell, Mrs. (F. G. Trafford).

George Geith of Fen Court 2 v. — Maxwell Drewitt 2 v. — The Race for Wealth 2 v. — Far above Rubies 2 v. — The Earl's Promise 2 v. — Mortomley's Estate 2 v.

"Rita."
Souls 1 v. — The Jesters 1 v. — The Masqueraders 2 v. — Queer Lady Judas 2 v. — Prince Charming 1 v.

Ritchie, Mrs. Anne Thackeray: *vide* **Miss Thackeray.**

Roberts, Miss: *vide* Author of **"Mademoiselle Mori."**

Robertson, Rev. Frederick W., † 1853.
Sermons 4 v.

Robins, Miss: *vide* **Raimond.**

Robinson, F.: *vide* Author of **"No Church."**

Ross, Charles H.
The Pretty Widow 1 v. — A London Romance 2 v.

Ross, Martin: *vide* **Somerville.**

Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, † 1882.
Poems 1 v. — Ballads and Sonnets 1 v.

"Roy Tellet."
The Outcasts 1 v. — A Draught of Lethe 1 v. — Pastor and Prelate 2 v.

Ruffini, J., † 1881.
Lavinia 2 v. — Doctor Antonio 1 v. — Lorenzo Benoni 1 v. — Vincenzo 2 v. — A Quiet Nook in the Jura 1 v. — The Paragreens on a Visit to Paris 1 v. — Carlino, and other Stories 1 v.

Ruskin, John, † 1902.
Sesame and Lilies 1 v. — The Stones of Venice 2 v.

Russell, W. Clark.
A Sailor's Sweetheart 2 v. — The "Lady Maud" 2 v. — A Sea Queen 2 v.

Russell, George W. E.
Collections and Recollections. By One who has kept a Diary 2 v. — A Londoner's Log-Book 1 v.

Sala, George Augustus, † 1895.
The Seven Sons of Mammon 2 v.

Saunders, John.
Israel Mort, Overman 2 v. — The Shipowner's Daughter 2 v. — A Noble Wife 2 v.

Saunders, Katherine (Mrs. Cooper).
Joan Merryweather, and other Tales 1 v. — *Gideon's Rock*, and other Tales 1 v. — *The High Mills* 2 v. — Sebastian 1 v.

Savage, Richard Henry (Am.), † 1903.
My Official Wife 1 v. — The Little Lady of Lagunitas (with Portrait) 2 v. — Prince Schamyl's Wooing 1 v. — The Masked Venus 2 v. — Delilah of Harlem 2 v. — The Anarchist 2 v. — A Daughter of Judas 1 v. — In the Old Chateau 1 v. — Miss Devereux of the Mariquita 2 v. — Checked Through 2 v. — A Modern Corsair 2 v. — In the Swim 2 v. — The White Lady of Khaminavatka 2 v. — In the House of His Friends 2 v. — The Mystery of a Shipyard 2 v. — A Monte Cristo in Khaki 1 v.

Schreiner, Olive.
Trooper Peter Halket of Mashonaland 1 v.

Scott, Sir Walter, † 1832.
Waverley (with Portrait) 1 v. — The Antiquary 1 v. — Ivanhoe 1 v. — Kenilworth 1 v. — Quentin Durward 1 v. — Old Mortality 1 v. — Guy Mannering 1 v. — Rob Roy 1 v. — The Pirate 1 v. — The Fortunes of Nigel 1 v. — The Black Dwarf; A Legend of Montrose 1 v. — The Bride of Lammermoor 1 v. — The Heart of Mid-Lothian 2 v. — The Monastery 1 v. — The Abbot 1 v. — Peveril of the Peak 2 v. — Poetical Works 2 v. — Woodstock 1 v. — The Fair Maid of Perth 1 v. — Anne of Geierstein 1 v.

Seeley, Prof. J. R., M.A., † 1895.
Life and Times of Stein (with a Portrait of Stein) 4 v. — The Expansion of England 1 v. — Goethe 1 v.

Sewell, Elizabeth.
Amy Herbert 2 v. — Ursula 2 v. — A Glimpse of the World 2 v. — The Journal of a Home Life 2 v. — After Life 2 v. — The Experience of Life 2 v.

Shakespeare, William, † 1616.
Plays and Poems (with Portrait) *(Second Edition)* 7 v. — Doubtful Plays 1 v.
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Sharp, William: *vide* **Miss Howard and Swinburne.**

Shelley, Percy Bysshe, † 1822.
A Selection from his Poems 1 v.

Sheppard, Nathan (Am.), † 1888.
Shut up in Paris 1 v.

Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, † 1816.
The Dramatic Works 1 v.

Shorthouse, J. Henry.
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Smedley, F. E.: *vide* Author of "Frank Fairlegh."

Smollett, Tobias, † 1771.
Roderick Random 1 v. — Humphry Clinker 1 v. — Peregrine Pickle 2 v.

"Society in London," Author of.
Society in London. By a Foreign Resident 1 v.

Somerville, E. Œ., & Martin Ross.
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The Spanish Brothers 2 v.

Stanhope, Earl (Lord Mahon), † 1875.
The History of England 7 v. — Reign of Queen Anne 2 v.

Steel, Flora Annie.
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Steevens, G. W., † 1900.
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Sterne, Laurence, † 1768.
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Stevenson, Robert Louis, † 1894.
Treasure Island 1 v. — Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, and An Inland Voyage 1 v. — Kidnapped 1 v. — The Black Arrow 1 v. — The Master of Ballantrae 1 v. — The Merry Men, etc. 1 v. — Across the Plains, etc. 1 v. — Island Nights' Entertainments 1 v. — Catriona 1 v. — Weir of Hermiston 1 v. — St. Ives 2 v. — In the South Seas 2 v. — Tales and Fantasies 1 v.

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Still Waters 1 v. — Dorothy 1 v. — De *Cressy* 1 v. — *Uncle* Ralph 1 v. — Maiden Sisters 1 v. — Martha Brown 1 v. — Vanessa 1 v.

Stirling, M. C.: *vide* G. M. Craik.

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"Story of a Penitent Soul, the," Author of.
The Story of a Penitent Soul 1 v.

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Stowe, Mrs. Harriet Beecher (Am.), † 1896.
Uncle Tom's Cabin (with Portrait) 2 v. — A Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin 2 v. — Dred 2 v. — The Minister's Wooing 1 v. — Oldtown Folks 2 v.

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Swift, Jonathan (Dean Swift), † 1745.
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Tautphoeus, Baroness, † 1893.
Cyrilla 2 v. — The Initials 2 v. — Quits 2 v. — At Odds 2 v.

Taylor, Col. Meadows, † 1876.
Tara; a Mahratta Tale 3 v.

Templeton: *vide* Author of "Horace Templeton."

Tennyson, Alfred (Lord), † 1892.
Poetical Works 8 v. — Queen Mary 1 v. — Harold 1 v. — Becket; The Cup; The Falcon 1 v. — Locksley Hall, sixty Years after; The Promise of May; Tiresias and other Poems 1 v. — A Memoir. By His Son (with Portrait) 4 v.

Testament, the New: *vide* **New.**

Thackeray, William Makepeace, † 1863.

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"Tim," Author of.

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Trois-Etoiles, *vide* **Grenville: Murray.**

Trollope, Anthony, † 1882.

Doctor Thorne 2 v. — The Bertrams 2 v. — The Warden 1 v. — Barchester Towers 2 v. — Castle Richmond 2 v. — The West Indies 1 v. — Framley Parsonage 2 v. — North America 3 v. — Orley Farm 3 v. — Rachel Ray 2 v. — The Small House at Allington 3 v. — Can you forgive her? 3 v. — The Belton Estate 2 v. — Nina Balatka 1 v. — The Last Chronicle of Barset 3 v. — The Claverings 2 v. — Phineas Finn 3 v. — He knew he was right 3 v. — The Vicar of Bullhampton 2 v. — Sir Harry Hotspur of Humblethwaite 1 v. — Ralph the Heir 2 v. — The Golden Lion of Granpere 1 v. — Australia and New Zealand 3 v. — Lady Anna 2 v. — Harry Heathcote of Gangoil 1 v. — The Way we live now 4 v. — The Prime Minister 4 v. — The American Senator 3 v. — South Africa 2 v. — Is He Popenjoy? 3 v. — An Eye for an Eye 1 v. — John Caldigate 3 v. — Cousin Henry 1 v. — The Duke's Children 3 v. — Dr. Wortle's School 1 v. — Ayala's Angel 3 v. — The Fixed Period 1 v. — Marion Fay 2 v. — Kept in the Dark 1 v. — Frau Frohmann, and other Stories 1 v. — Alice Dugdale, and other Stories 1 v. — La Mère Bauche, and other Stories 1 v. — The Mistletoe Bough, and other Stories 1 v. — An Autobiography 1 v. — An Old Man's Love 1 v.

Trollope, T. Adolphus, † 1892.

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Trowbridge, W. R. H.

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Twain, Mark (Samuel L. Clemens) (Am.).

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Warren, Samuel, † 1877.
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Westbury, Hugh.
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Wetherell, Elizabeth (Susan Warner) (Am.), † 1885.
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Weyman, Stanley J.
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Wood, H. F.

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Wood, Mrs. Henry (Johnny Ludlow), † 1887.

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Woodroffe, Daniel.

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Wordsworth, William, † 1850.

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Yonge, Charlotte M., † 1901.

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